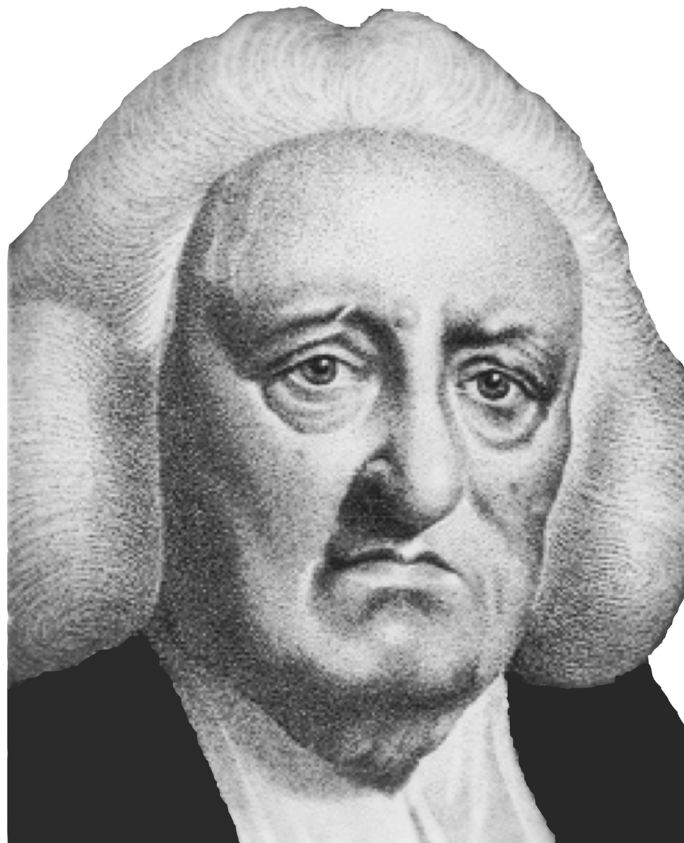


DR. JOHN GILL SERMONS

Sermons and Tracts Volume 2

Dr. John Gill

SERMONS AND TRACTS



BY DR. JOHN GILL

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Bierton Particular Baptists have republished the whole of Dr. Gills Body of **Doctrinal and Practical Divinity, The Cause of God And Truth. Sermons and Tracts in several volumes**, See our publications list at the end of this volume. We call our reader to read **James Stuart Russell's book, "The Parousia"** to help in the study of eschatology to treat those errors in Historicism, as mentioned in our publication, **Difficulties Associated With Articles Of Religion Among Particular Baptists**

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1 Christ The Saviour From The Tempest.

A Sermon,

In commemoration of the Great Storm, in the Year MDCCIII: Preached in Little Wild-street, near Lincoln's-Inn Fields, Nov. 27, 1736.

MATTHEW 8:25

Lord save us; We perish.

These words are a very importunate petition of the disciples of Christ unto him, when in great danger by a storm at sea. The case of such persons, their great distress, and earnest cries for deliverance, and the manner of it, are very elegantly and beautifully described by the Psalmist; when he says, They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters: these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep; for he commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof: They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths, their soul is melted because of trouble: they reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits end: Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses: He Maketh the storm to calm; so that the waves thereof are still: Then they are glad, because they be quite; so he bringeth them to their desired haven. (Psal. 107:23—30) A late valuable writer[1] is of opinion, that this passage of the Psalmist is not to be considered as an account of what had happened, and so might happen again to navigators in common, but as a prediction or prophecy of what should befall the disciples of Christ, when on shipboard with him; and had its exact accomplishment in the case before us. He supposes, that the disciples of Christ are the persons here described, that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; their occupation and employment, which they used both before and after they were called by Christ to be his apostles, being that of fishermen. These being in a ship with Christ, the Lord commanded and raised the stormy wind; a great tempest arose in the sea, which lifted up the waves thereof, so that they seemed to mount up to the heaven; and beating into the ship, covered and filled it, insomuch, that they were just ready to go down to the depths; then their soul was melted because of trouble: And being at their wits end, not knowing what to do, apply to their Lord and Master; and as they go to him at the stern of the ship, through the

shaking of the vessel, reeled to and fro, and staggered like drunken men; and cry unto him in their trouble, saying, Master, Carest thou not that we perish? Then he brought them out of their distresses, by making the storm a calm; so that the waves thereof were still, when he rebuked the wind, and the raging of the sea. And now did they see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep; and said one to another, What manner of person is this whom the winds and sea obey? Then were they glad, because the wind and sea were quiet; so he brought them to their desired haven, when they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee. I cannot say I am entirely of this writer's mind; but rather think, that this account refers to a case which had been, and might be again, and may be accommodated to any case of the like kind, and particularly to this of the disciples; for certain it is, that they were in such distress and danger, did cry unto the Lord for help, and had a wonderful deliverance wrought for them. In the words now read may be observed,

I. The danger and distress the disciples were in, and their sense of the same: We perish. II. The application they made to Christ, in which they were certainly right; Lord save us.

I. The disciples were at this time in great danger and distress; which appear not only from this expression of theirs, We perish, but also from the narrative of their case in the context: For,

1. It is said, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea (Matt. 8:24); a great tempest, *μεγας σεισμ*, a great concussion, or shaking. The same word is frequently used both in scripture (Matt. 24:7 and 28:2), and in other writers,[2] for the *Terræ motus*, or earthquake. Here it is ascribed to the sea; such a shaking we read of in the prophecy of Haggai (Hagg. 2:6), which had now, at least in part, its literal accomplishment; and when the Messiah, the desire of all nations, should come, Jehovah would shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land. The stormy wind agitated and moved the sea, and the waves thereof; and both wind and sea shook the ship, and the men that were in it: which threw them into great surprise and fear. One of the other evangelists (Luke 8:23) calls this tempest, a storm of wind; and another (Mark 4:37), a great storm of wind; and both of them use the word *λαίλαψ*, *lælaps*, which is a particular kind of wind, or

is rather a conflict of many winds.[3] The Philosopher says, that *lælaps*, as also *strobilus*, is a wind that is suddenly whirled, and rolled about, downwards and upwards. It is defined by a learned Grecian, to be “a storm, or tempest of wind, with rain.” It seems to be a whirlwind, and hurricane, in which the disciples were. All the views of it, shew them to be in imminent danger.

It is also said, that this tempest arose. Could we give into a vulgar notion, that winds may be, and sometimes are raised by Satan, we should be tempted to think, that this storm was raised by him, with a malicious intent to destroy Christ and his disciples at once; since he was always seeking an opportunity to take away the life of Christ, and put different persons upon different methods of doing it, and at last accomplished his end. But we shall have occasion to observe hereafter, in this discourse, that Satan has no power to raise, continue, restrain, or lay a wind. Nor did this tempest arise by chance; it was no fortuitous event, but was ordered to be, at this very juncture, by the all-wise, and all-governing providence of that God, who commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, for the trial of the faith of the disciples of Christ; and that he might have an opportunity of giving proof of his Deity on the sea, as he had lately done in several instances on the dry land. The evangelist Luke says (Luke 8:23), that this storm of wind came down: He seems to refer to the course and motion of the winds, which are exhalations from the earth, raised up into the middle region of the air; from whence they are repelled, by a superior force, to the lower region; and from thence move, in an oblique, slanting manner, downwards. So we read of a dry wind of the high places, even a full wind from those places not to fan, nor to cleanse (Jer. 4:11, 12). This violent wind came down with great force into the sea, and lifted up its waves, which beat into the ship, and pressed it much, so that it was in great danger of being sunk by them.

The place where this tempest arose, or into which this storm of wind came down, is here said to be the sea. The evangelist Luke (Luke 8:23), calls it a lake; and is the same with the lake of Genesareth, he elsewhere makes mention of (Luke 5:1). But both the evangelists, Matthew and Mark, call it the sea; and is what is sometimes in scripture call the sea of Tiberius (John 6:1, 21:1), and the sea of Galilee; agreeable to

the language of the Jewish writers, when they have occasion to speak of it; and was, as Pliny says, about sixteen miles long, and six broad. Now, to be in a storm on land is terrible, but to be in one out at sea is much more so.

To all this, the word *behold* is prefixed; which is sometimes used, when something extraordinary and preternatural is spoke of (See Isai. 7:14). This storm seems to have been more than an ordinary one, at least, it was sudden, and unexpected. When the disciples entered the ship, the air was serene, the sea still and quiet, there was no appearance or likelihood of a tempest; but quickly after they had set sail, at once, on a sudden, at unawares, this storm came down upon them; which must needs throw them into great consternation and distress.

2. The ship was covered with the waves, which so beat into it, as another Evangelist expresses it (Mark 4:37), that it was now full of water; yea, it is said (Luke 8:23), that they were filled with water, and were in jeopardy, or in great danger; which, perhaps, respects the other little ships (Mark 4:36), that were in company with this, and were so ordered by divine providence, to be witnesses of this wondrous event. In one of the copies, of one of the evangelists, the word *βυθίζεθαι* is used; which signifies, that not only the ship was covered and filled with water, but that it was immersed, or just sinking into the deep; so that the disciples were brought to the utmost extremity.

3. What greatly added to, and increased their distress, it is observed, that Christ was asleep; all the evangelists agree in this, though they do not use the same word. The evangelist Mark mentions the place where he was asleep, in the hinder part of the ship, *ἐπὶ τῇ πρύμνῃ*, in the stern, where he, as Lord and Master, should be; but, to the great concern of the disciples, he was there asleep, and that in a dead, deep, sound sleep, as the word, which the evangelist Luke makes use of, signifies; and is confirmed by the loud cries, and repeated calls of the disciples to him, saying, Master, Master, We perish. This sleep, doubtless, arose from natural causes, and was more easily brought upon him, through his very great fatigue in preaching his sermon upon the mount, from whence he was just come down; and through the great resort of people to him, to heal the sick, and cast out devils. He seems to signify, that he was in great uneasiness, and weariness

of body, to a certain man, just before he entered into the ship, who said to him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest; who is thus answered by him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head (Matt. 8:19, 20); intimating, as though he wanted an opportunity to lie down, and take some rest: And accordingly, when he was come into the ship, placing himself at the stern, finds a pillow, lays down his head upon it, and falls fast asleep. But, though this sleep of his was natural, yet it was so ordered by the providence of God, that it should in this manner come upon him, at this time, for the further trial of the faith of his disciples.

4. The great distress they were in expressed in these words, We perish, ἀπολλυμεθα (So the word is rendered, in Luke 19:10, 2 Cor. 4:3), we are lost; a way of speaking still in use among seafaring men, and indeed, in common use with others. Nothing is more frequent that for us to say, such a vessel, or such a ship's crew, or such a person were lost, at such a time, and in such a place. It is also to be observed, that they do not say, we are in danger of being lost, or we are ready to be lost, or we shall be lost, but we are lost; which shews what apprehensions they had of their condition, and that their case was like that of the apostle Paul, and the mariners with him, when all hope, that they should be saved, was taken away (Acts 27:2). So the disciples saw no probability of escaping by any natural, rational methods; they looked upon themselves as lost. Christ was their last shift, and he was asleep; however, they resolve to betake themselves to him: Which brings me,

II. To the application they make to him, Lord save us: which shews,

1. That they believed he was able to save them: And they had a great deal of reason to believe it, since such considerable miracles were so lately wrought in their presence; an account of which is given in this chapter. A leper comes to him, declaring his faith in him, that is he was willing, he was sure he was able to cleanse him of his leprosy; upon which, Christ put forth his hand, and with a single touch, saying to him I will, Be thou clean, immediately removed it. A centurion addresses him on the account of his servant, who lay sick of a palsy, signifying, that he verily believed, that if he would speak the word only, his servant would

be instantly healed; his reply is, So be it done unto thee; and his servant was healed the very same hour. Next he enters Peter's house, where is wife's mother lay sick of a fever; he does but touch her hand, and the fever leaves her. These instances, together with the multitude of the sick he healed, and of them that were possessed with devils he cast out with his word, were sufficient to persuade the disciples, that he was able to deliver them in their great extremity. Our Lord, indeed, blames them for their incredulity, and want of faith. The question he put to them, as related by one of the evangelists, is, Where is your faith? (Luke 8:25) You professed to have, and you had, some faith in me a little while ago; but what is become of it now? Yea, as it stands in another evangelist, it is put thus, Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith? (Mark 4:40) that is in exercise: Some faith they had, though it was but small; for the question, as it appears in our evangelist, is put thus, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? (Matt. 8:26) They had no faith in him, as sleeping, but had some little faith in him, that he was able to help them, provided he was awakened out of sleep; for this, Christ blames them. For though, as the Son of man, he was asleep; yet he, as the Son of God, and Israel's keeper, and theirs, neither slumbers, nor sleeps; and was equally able to save them sleeping, as waking.

2. It is not only certain, that he was able to save them; but it is a matter of fact, that he did save them. Being awakened by his disciples, he raises his head from his pillow, stands up, and with a majestic voice, in an authoritative manner, shewing some kind of resentment at the wind and seas, as if they had exceeded their commission, and the one had blown, and the other raged, too much and too long, he rebukes them in such language as this, Peace, be still, (Mark 4:39) σιωπα, πεφίμωσο, "be silent, hold thy peace, stop thy mouth, put a bridle upon it, as the last word signifies; and go on no longer, to threaten with shipwreck, and loss of lives," Upon this, the wind ceased, the sea became calm, and the ship moved quietly on, and they all arrived safe at the country of the Gadarenes.

3. This had a very considerable effect, both upon the mariners and the disciples, who rightly concluded from hence, that their Deliverer was more than a man. There was such a shine of majesty, such a lustre

of divine power, appeared in this affair, as filled them with astonishment and fear; they marvelled greatly, and feared exceedingly. It had this effect, both upon the men, and the disciples; for though our evangelist seems to relate this, as though the mariners were the persons only who were thus affected with the providence, and the manner of deliverance; who said one to another, What manner of person is this? Ποταπός ἐστὶν οὗτος, “of what qualities, powers and perfections, is this person possessed?” But the other evangelists represent it (Mark 4:41, Luke 8:25), as the question of the disciples to one another; saying, τις ἄρα οὗτός ἐστιν, “Who is this person?” Surely, he must be more than a mere man; he can be no other than the might God, whom the winds and sea obey. It is to be observed, that the word man, which is put into our translation, is not in the question as expressed in any of the evangelists. The disciples were abundantly convinced by this instance, which so nearly concerned themselves, that Christ must be God over all blessed for ever.

What I shall do further, will be to improve this wonderful instance of the power of Christ, in favour of his divinity; and to shew, that the disciples were right, in their application to him, in this their distress; as are also all poor perishing sinners, sensible of their lost condition, when they have recourse to him alone for eternal life and salvation. In order to this,

First, I shall endeavour to prove, that the power and government of the wind and sea, are only with God, and not with any mere creature. Men have no power, either to raise, or lay the wind: There is no such thing, as a conjuring wind: There is no such set of men, who by magic art, or by all the assistance the devil can give them, are able to perform anything of this nature. We are told, that some have been so ignorant, or wicked, as to pretend to sell winds; and others, no less stupid and impious, who have bought them; but this is all a dream and delusion. These are deceivers and deceived; for who, what man, has gathered the wind in his fist, and can hold it there, and let it loose at his pleasure? What is his name, and what is his son’s name, if thou canst tell? (Prov. 30:4) Name the man, or his son? say when he was born, in what age he lived, of what country was he; who was his immediate son, or what of his posterity now remain: not any of these circumstances, or any thing like them,

wilt thou ever be able to produce. As the Lord said to Job, (Job 38:34, 35) Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee? Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go and say unto thee, Here we are? So it may be said to any of the sons of man, Canst thou lift up thy voice to the winds, and send them forth when and where thou pleasest, command and control them, at thy pleasure? say to one, Go thither and it goes; and to another, Come, and it cometh? No, this is not within the compass of the power of a creature. The devil himself has no such power; He may as soon create a world as create the wind, raise a storm, or lay a tempest. The treasures of the wind are under lock and key: Satan has not the keeping of them; they are locked up from him, they are out of his reach, he cannot bring them forth when he pleases: He is indeed called (Ephes. 2:2), The prince of the power of the air; not because he has a power to disturb, or still it, to cover it with clouds and blackness, or raise storms and tempest in it; but, because he has the government of those principalities and powers, that posse of apostate spirits; who, being banished from the realms above, have their abode in the air; where, as vagabonds, they rove about, and wonder up and down in it. Now Satan the angel of the bottomless pit, is prince, or king, over them, whose name in the Hebrew tongue, is Abbaddon, and in the Greek tongue, Apollyon, which both signify a destroyer (Rev. 9:11). The only scriptural instance of the power of Satan over the wind, that is produced, is the wind that blew down the house where Job’s children were, and destroyed them: but this wind is not said to come from Satan, but from the wilderness; (Job 1:19) from a certain point in the heavens under the government and direction of Jehovah. All the hand the devil can be supposed to have in it, under divine permission, was to take the advantage of the sweep of it, just as it came by the house, to add force unto it; and, by his posse of devils with him, to whirl it about the house, and push it upon it with the greater violence: Nor is the wind in the power, and under the government of the good angels. Jehovah has, indeed, made his angels spirits, winds, (Psalm 104:4) as some translate the word: But then they are so called, not because, they are winds, or have the management and direction of them, but because they are like unto them; swift to do the will and work of God, who walketh, and flies upon the wings

of the wind (Psalm 104:3, and 18:10). In the book of the Revelation, (Rev. 7:6) four angels are represented, as standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree: this is not to be understood of the angels in a literal, but in a mystical sense, as holding, or restraining the evil angels, or false teachers, from hurting the saints, or the ministers of the gospel, from their ministrations of it, as a judgment upon those that despise it: God has sole power and government of the winds in his own hands. The Heathens themselves were convinced of this; and therefore set up an idol God, whom they called Æolus, to preside over the winds; and who, they supposed had a power of loosing and restraining them at his pleasure: Yea, they thought the wind to be a deity itself, and sometimes built temples, erected altars, and paid homage to it. So Augustus made and performed a vow to Circius, a wind which greatly infested France, and sometimes came with such force, as to un-tile their houses; and so did the Calabrians to Japyx; the Apulians to the wind Arabelus; the Athenians to Sciron; and the Pamphilians to Gagneus: which are the names of the several winds peculiar to these people; to whom they paid their devours, that they might not either infect them with diseases, or destroy their fields: Particularly, the Thurians having received a considerable favour from Boreas, the North wind, fulfilled their vows to it, as to a god; because by a vehement gust, it utterly destroyed the navy, which Dionysius had prepared for their destruction: So when Xerxes brought his numerous forces into Greece, the Grecians applied to the Delphick oracle: from whence they received this answer, "That they must pray the assistance of the winds:" upon which, they built an altar, and found them favorable to them, for their enemies whole navy was destroyed and sunk. These were the sentiments and practices of men, who were without the knowledge of the true God. The wind is no Deity, but a creature, made by the power of God, and governed by him; and is not under the precedence, influence, and direction, of Æolus, Pallas, Anemotis, or any other of the rabble deities of the Heathens; but is wholly, and only, in the hands, and under the command of him, who is the Lord, the true God; he is the living God, and an everlasting King: At his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall

not be able to abide his indignation.—He hath made the earth by his power; he hath established the world by his wisdom; and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion: When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings with the rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures. (Jer. 10:10, 12, 13)

The account of the scripture gives of the divine power, and influence over the wind, is very express and particular. God is represented as the creator of it: whatever are the second causes of it, or the matter of which it consists, or that which gives it its form, force and motion; the Lord is certainly the first, and efficient cause of it: Hence he stands described, as he who formeth the mountains, and createth the wind. (Amos 4:13) As he has his treasures of the snow, and of the hail, so likewise of the wind, which he brings forth when he pleases; he has them ready and prepared, or can, and does quickly prepare them, when he has occasion for them. It is said (Jonah 4:8), that God prepared a vehement east wind, "a plowing one;" which plowed up the sand, and blew it in the face of Jonah, so that he was almost suffocated with it; which, with the sun beating upon him, must be very afflictive to him. The Lord is also said, to send out a great wind into the sea, (Jonah 1:4) to fetch back Jonah; who, being sent on an errand, was disobedient and fled from the presence of God: The wind, as boisterous and blustering as it sometimes is, was more obedient to the command of God than the prophet. He says to one wind, Go, and it goes; and to another, Come, and it cometh. He makes use of them to various ends and purposes: Sometimes in a way of mercy: as when he made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters of the flood were assuaged; (Gen. 8:1) when there went forth a wind from the Lord, and brought quails from the sea, and let them fall by the camp (Num. 9:31) of the Israelites for their food and refreshment; when the wind brought up a great rain, after the land of Israel had been without one for three years and a half; (1 Kings 18:45) when the Lord caused the sea to go back, by a strong east wind all night and made the sea a dry land, and the waters were divided, (Exod. 19:21) so that the Israelites could pass through as on dry land. And sometimes he uses them in a way of judgment; as when he (lid blow with his wind, the

sea covered them, the Egyptians ; they sunk as lead in the mighty waters : (Exod. 15:10) So he broke the ships of Tarshish with an east wind : (Psal. 48:7) But, whether it. he in one way or another he makes use of them, stormy wind is fulfilling his word, (Psal. 148:8) either of promise or command ; for it is always at his beck. he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind ; (Psal. 107:25) which is a considerable display of his almighty power: he caused an east wind to blow in the heavens; and, by his power, he brought in the south wind. (Psal. 78:26) He is also said, to make the weight for the winds; (Job 28:25) when he poizes them, fitly disposes them, and inclines them to this, or the other point ; to this, or the other coast; or, when he increases their force, makes them more ponderous; and when in the air, which is light of itself, he raises storms and tempests: And, perhaps, the rain may, in some sense, be a weight. for the winds; which, when it fills heavy, lessens the force, depresses the power and stops the progress of them ; wets their wings, bears them down, and causes them to subside However, certain it is, God has the sole power of raising and laying the wind. The sea also, and the roaring waves thereof, are at his command: As he has made the sea, and all that are in it, so he governs it, lifts up its waves, and restrains them by the word of his power. This is very fully and beautifully expressed by himself, in the following manner ; Who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb ? When I made the clouds the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling band for it; and brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors; and said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed? (Job 38:8-11) I go on,

Secondly, To observe, That Jesus Christ has such a power over the wind and seas. Hence it must unavoidably follow, that he is truly and properly God. This is sufficiently evident from the instance before us. It is said, that he rebuked the wind and the sea; a phrase that is used only of the divine Being, and cannot be said of any other than the most high God, who rebuked the red sea, and it was dried up; (Psalm 106:9) and who stands distinguished from all created beings by this, that he stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people. (Psalm 65:7) The Messiah makes use of this as an argument to prove,

that he is able to redeem, because he can rebuke the sea, and dry it up, and cover the heavens with clouds and tempests. Is my hand shortened at all, says he, that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver? Will any one say this of me? Behold, at my rebuke, I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness;—I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering. (Isaiah 50:2, 3) That this is the Messiah, who here speaks, the following words abundantly declare ‘The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, &c. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair, (Isaiah 50: 4-6) &c. Now, upon our Lord’s rebuking the wind and sea, the one ceased, and the other became a calm: This was done by speaking a word only, just in the same manner as he had, a little before, healed the centurion’s servant: And it was done in an authoritative manner; he commanded the winds and water, as the Lord and Master of them, and they obeyed him Never was any such thing heard of, as performed by a mere creature. It is reported of one of our kings of the Danish race, Canute, that “one day, as he was walking by the sea side, his attendants extolled him to the skies, and even proceeded to compare him to God himself. Offended at these extravagant praises, and willing to convince them of their folly and impiety, he ordered a chair to be brought; and seating himself in a place, where the tide was about to flow, turned to the sea, and said: O sea, thou art under my dominion, and the land I sit on is mine I charge thee not to presume to approach any further, nor to dare to wet the feet of thy sovereign. Having said this, he sat still for some time, as expecting the sea should obey his command; but, the tide advancing as usual, he took occasion from thence, to let base flatterers know, that the titles of Lord and Master, belong only to Him, whom the land (the wind) and the sea, obey.” There is one thing more observable in this instance of our Lord’s power over the wind and sea, that when he rebuked them, not only the wind ceased, but the sea immediately became a calm; which was very unusual, uncommon, and extraordinary: For, after the wind has ceased, and the storm is over, the waters of the sea, being agitated thereby, keep raging, and, in a violent motion, for a considerable time. Whereas here, soon as ever the word was spoke, that very moment, immediately, at once, the wind ceased, and the sea was calmed. That

man must be an infidel to Revelation, that can read this account, and deny the Deity of Christ; he must be drove to one or other of these two, either to deny the truth of the fact, and the circumstances of it, or believe that Jesus Christ is truly and properly God. Hence,

Thirdly, The disciples were certainly right, in their application to him for deliverance, when they were in so great danger and distress: Since he appears to be no other than the mighty God, who made the heavens, the earth and sea, and all that are in them; who upholds all things by the word of his power, by whom all things were created, and in whom all things consist; and therefore has a power of ruling, ordering, and disposing all things, according to his will and pleasure: And even as mediator, he has all power in heaven, and in earth, given unto him; which he makes use of in the behalf of his own people, both for their temporal and spiritual good. The disciples, applying to him, found him to be, even in a literal sense, an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest. (Isaiah 32:2) And,

Fourthly, Such equally are in the right, who being sensible of their lost perishing condition, have recourse to him alone, for eternal life and salvation. All men are in such a condition, as the descendants of Adam, and as considered in him, in whom all died. The sentence of death passed upon all men in him ; for that , “in whom” all have sinned. (1 Cor. 15:22, Rom. 5:12) All men are transgressors of the law of God, stand charged with the breaches of it; every mouth is stopped by it, and all the world become guilty before God. (Rom. 3:19) Every man and woman are liable to the curses of it, and to the wrath of God, for the violation of it. God's elect themselves are, by nature, the children of wrath, even as others; (Ephes. 2:3) equally deserving of it, as being in their nature- head, and in their nature-state. But all men are not sensible of this, some are whole, strong, healthful, and robust, in their own apprehensions, and need not a physician; (Matt. 9:12) they are rich in their own account, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; (Rev. 3:17) they are dead in sins, and have no spiritual sense and feeling of their wretched condition. They are like a man, that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or upon the top of a mast ; who says, they have stricken me, and I was not sick: they have beaten me and I felt it not: (Prov. 23:34, 35) and so remain indolent, and unconcerned

about a future state, or the danger of a present one: No man repents him of his wickedness, saying, what have I done; every one turns to his course, as the horse rusheth into battle. (Jer. 8:6) And this is, and will be the case, until the Spirit of God convinces of sin, righteousness, and judgment, And then they see themselves ready to perish, cry out in the bitterness of their souls, What must we do to be saved? Look upon themselves as lost and undone, and can find no soundness in their flesh, because of the anger of the Lord; nor any rest in their bones, because of their sin. They feel a tempest rising in their own breasts the law works wrath in them, and there is nothing else, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation. (Heb. 10:27) When they look upwards, the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness, and ungodliness of men; in their apprehensions, the storm of wrath is gathering thick and black, hangs over their heads, just ready to break and fall upon them. They are like the people of Israel, at the foot of mount Sinai, (Heb. 7:18-21) who were come to blackness, darkness and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words, which they that heard, intreated, that the word should not be spoken to them any more ; for they could not endure that which was commanded: And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake. And what adds to their distress is, that they find they are not able to help themselves, and know not which way to escape. They wish for wings like a dove, to fly away, and be at rest, to wander far off, and remain in the wilderness, and so hasten their escape from the windy storm and tempest; (Psalm 55:6-8) but alas! they know not. where to go from the Spirit, or flee from the presence of God. They are sensible, that rocks and mountains cannot hide them from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne and from the wrath of the Lord God almighty. Their own righteousness appears no other than rags, which cannot cover and skreen them from the avenging justice of God ; for they are as much convinced of the insufficiency of their righteousness to justify them before God, as of the exceeding sinfulness of sin; and therefore tremble at the thoughts of an awful future judgement.

Now, where should such poor, perishing creatures apply but to Christ, as the disciples, in their distress; and say to him, as they did, Lord, save us; we

perish? Should they not go in an humble manner, as Benhadad's servants did to the king of Israel, and prostrate themselves at his feet; and say, as the Publican did, God be merciful to us sinners? Should they not go to him with the resolution of Esther saying, If we perish, we will perish at the feet of Jesus? Such souls have a great deal of reason to believe they shall find this man, this god—man, and mediator the Lord Jesus Christ, an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest. Whither should they go, whither can they go, but unto him, who has the words of eternal life? God has appointed him to be his salvation unto the ends of the earth; he sent him, and he came to be the Saviour of the world. It is a faithful saying, deserves credit, and is worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save the chief of sinners: he is become the author of eternal salvation to all that obey him; his name is called Jesus, because he saves his people from all their sins, and from all the dreadful effects of them; Lie saves them from the law, from curse, and condemnation by it; from Satan and the world, from hell, the second death and wrath to come: He is mighty to save, able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him. And he is as willing as he is able; for he has said, (Isaiah 45:22) Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth,; for I am God, and there is none else. And, besides all this, there is salvation in no other person, nor by any other name; in vain it is hoped for from any other quarter, or by any other hand; and there is a full, complete and suitable salvation in him. His atoning sacrifice fully expiates sin; his righteousness justifies from all things; his blood, sprinkled upon the conscience, lays the tempest there, saying, Peace, be still; and being carried within the veil, and sprinkled upon the mercy seat, before the throne, secures from the storm of divine wrath to come; and his name is a strong tower, whither the righteous run, and are safe. But to hasten to a conclusion:

The occasion of this discourse is the great storm, commonly called the high wind; which arose the twenty-sixth, and continued to the twenty-seventh of November, one thousand seven hundred and three, thirty three years ago: On the account of which, a day of humiliation was appointed by public authority, January the nineteenth following. It is not easy to say, what disasters and calamities it brought here,

and in other parts of Europe; how many edifices, of a larger and lesser size, were thrown down, in cities, towns and villages; what devastations were made, in parks, gardens and inclosures; how much shipping, of greater and smaller bulk, were destroyed; and, what is of all most awful, what multitudes of souls, at once, launched into an endless eternity. To give a detail of the several particulars of these things would be long and tedious, and in a great measure needless, after so many narratives have been printed, and so many discourses published; among the most valuable of which number, must he allowed to stand a discourse, preached in this place, and on this occasion, since made public by my predecessor, Mr. Benjamin Stinton.[4]

It is remarkable, that on this very day, seven years ago, a considerable storm of wind arose; which blew much about the same time this did, in its greatest fury, we now commemorate. I have reason to believe, that there is one[5] here present, who was cast away in it, and remarkably delivered, after having been exposed to the most imminent danger. I doubt not, but such an one retains a sense of the mercy, and thankfully acknowledges the goodness of God, and the kind interposure of divine providence, in his favour. I shall close all with a word of exhortation.

Let us adore the perfections, and observe the operations of Father, Son, and Spirit, in the government and management of the winds and seas. The concern, that the Father of Christ has herein, is not contested; nor need there be any hesitation about the Son, when the instance, now attended to, is carefully considered; nor should there be any about the holy Ghost, when it is observed, that the heavens were, at first, garnished by him, and he moved upon the face of the waters, and brought the present earth into the form and order, in which it has since appeared. Besides, his extraordinary gifts bestowed upon the apostles, on the day of Pentecost, came down upon them with a rushing, mighty wind: (Acts 2:1) And the common, or ordinary operations of his grace, in the souls of men, are compared to the wind: The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit. (John 3:8) Let us also take notice of the providences of God, and not let them be neglected by us, or buried in oblivion; we should make every proper use of them

ourselves, and transmit them to posterity: Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord. (Psalm 107:43) Doubtless, with such a view, Mr. Taylor, who, whilst he lived, was a member of the church which meets in this place, laid a foundation for the annual observation of this day. Again in the view of the awful dispensations of providence, let us humble ourselves before God, since these shew the mighty hand of the Lord; let us stand in awe of his righteous judgments. How soon, and how easy, can he make this large and populous city, and the whole kingdom, an heap of rubbish? Sanctify the Lord of hosts, make him your fear, and your dread. To conclude, in a view of all our sins and transgressions, and of all that wrath and ruin they expose us to, let us take sanctuary in Christ; who is a strength to the poor; a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast from the terrible ones, sin, law, and justice, is as a storm against the wall. (Isaiah 25:4)

2 David A Type Of Christ

2 SAMUEL 23:1

Now these be the last words of David; David the Son of Jesse said, and the Man who was raised up on high, the Anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet Psalmist of Israel, said.

THESE be tile last words of David. This refers not to what goes before, in the preceding chapter, which contains a psalm or song of David, and which is no other than the 18th Psalm with some little variation. That Psalm was penned upon a solemn and joyful occasion, as we are told in the title. David spake unto tile Lord the words of this song, in the day that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies and the hand of Saul (Ps. 18, Title). Now this can only respect his conquest over the Moabites, Edomites and Syrians, which we read of in the eighth chapter of this book, and which was some time before the death of David, therefore cannot be his last words.

These be the last words of David, must therefore refer to what follow in verse 2 to verse 7.

Now, when they are said to be the last words of David, we are not. to suppose they were the last he ever spake in this world; no, it seems pretty plain that he said a great deal after this. It looks as if after this he had conversation with his son Solomon; gave him

directions about building the Temple; informed him of the preparation lie had made for it, and encouraged him to begin and go on with that work. But these are the last words of David, after he had finished his book of psalms; the last words of David which he spake by divine inspiration; the last words of David delivered by way of prophecy, for a prophet he was: so the Apostle Peter calls him in the second of Acts. He foretold things to come, things concerning the Messiah. The ancient Chaldee Paraphrase calls these his last words, expressly, "A prophecy that he prophesied concerning the times of consolation, the days of the Messiah;" and it is most clear and manifest, the Messiah is spoken of by him in these, who should be as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds, as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain (verse 4). As we shall see hereafter.

Well then, these were the last words of David, which he spake by way of prophecy; and they were, no doubt, spoken at the close of his days, that is certain and it may be observed, that great men, under the former dispensation, towards the close of their days, in some of their last speeches, said things prophetic. So Jacob, when his time drew near to die, called for his sons, and told them what should befall them in the latter days: not so much what should befall their persons, as their tribes in after times. So Moses the man of God, just before his death, blessed all the tribes of Israel in a prophetic way. And David's last words were of this kind.

The words of persons of note and esteem among men, persons of rank, in an elevated state of life, of large capacity and great knowledge, especially those of piety and religion, are generally taken notice of, and had in great esteem: and such was the person whose last words these are. He was a man of high rank, in an elevated station, a King of Israel. He was a man of great capacity and knowledge in things natural, civil and divine. That he was a religious man, the book of psalms is a full proof.—Now the last words of such a man must deserve public notice; are worthy of our consideration. The last words of our friends and acquaintance are generally regarded, and often talked of; surely then the words of so great a man as David deserve our highest regard for which reason I purpose to consider and go through them.

Let me, however, just observe here, that if these last words of David are worthy of our notice, how much more the last words of our blessed Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ? of whom he was an eminent type. Some of his last words, as recorded by the Evangelist Matthew, were his expostulatory ones before his divine Father. When he was under natural darkness, the sun having withdrawn himself; when under spiritual darkness, God having hid his face from him; and when he bore the wrath of God, and all the vengeance due to his people for their sins and transgressions, it caused him under all to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me (Matthew 27:46)? These, I say, were some of his last words, according to Matthew. The Evangelist Luke gives us a larger account than this. He mentions some other words, which were his last, or near his last. One is a petition put up on the behalf of those who crucified him. Father forgive them, for they know not what they do (Luke 23:34). This shows what an excellent spirit he was of, and worthy to be regarded and followed by all that call themselves the disciples and followers of the blessed Jesus. Another expression recorded by the same Evangelist, and which seems to be later, is, Into thy hands I commit my Spirit (Luke 23:46); that is, his reasonable soul, which was just about to be separated from his body by death. He committed this into the hands of his divine Father. This deserves our imitation also. But; the Apostle John is still more particular: he tells us the very last words which were spoken by Christ, that he said, It is finished (John 19:30), and then gave up the ghost. Then the work he came into this world to do was all finished, and particularly the great work of our redemption and salvation: that was finished, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do (John 17:4). O, what words are these! they ought always to be remembered, and never forgotten by believers in Christ. These last words of Christ are the foundation of all our faith, hope, joy, and comfort. Salvation is finished. These were the last words of our antitypical David.

I proceed now to the text, in which we have a description of David, I. By his name—David.

II. By his descent—the son of Jesse—which was comparatively low and mean.

III. By his exaltation from a low estate to a higher one—The man who was raised up on high.

IV. By his unction—the anointed of the God of Jacob.

V. By his usefulness to the Church of God, particularly in psalmody, which in his time was raised to the highest pitch with regard to the outward administration of it: therefore he is called, the sweet psalmist of Israel.

And in all these things I shall consider David as a type of the Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ. We shall find all the characters agree with him.

I. He is described here by his name, David: which signifies beloved, as no doubt he was by his parents, he being their youngest son. He was also beloved of God, even when he was disesteemed of men. The stone which the builders refused, was made by Jehovah the head of the corner. He was preferred before all his elder brethren, by the Lord. He was the man after God's own heart, whom he had pitched upon, and therefore raised him to the throne of Israel. He was beloved of man; not only by Jonathan the son of Saul, who loved him as his own soul; but also of the whole nation. It is said by the Historian, that all Israel and Judah loved David (1 Sam. 18:16). They all loved him, to a man, for his courteous, affable disposition and behavior, and because he went out with their armies, fought their battles for them, and came in a victorious conqueror. Therefore with great propriety is his name called David.

This name is given to the Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ; given unto him, and spoken of him, when David was no more; when he had been dead many hundreds of years. Spoken of Christ in reference to times then to come, and yet to come; for it is said, They shall serve the Lord their God, and David their King (Jer. 30:9). This respects times that are yet to come: the like is said in Hosea 3:4, 5, The children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim: afterward shall the children of Israel return and seek the Lord their God, and David their king. The former part has been fulfilled, but the latter remains yet to be accomplished: the time is yet to come that they shall seek the Lord their God, and David their king. So in other prophecies, where it is foretold that the Lord would raise up one shepherd and one prince over them, even David his servant (Ezek. 34:23, 24): —This

could never be meant literally of David: it means the antitype of David, our Lord Jesus Christ, who in the latter day will be a prince and a king over the Jewish nation, converted and called by grace.

And this name well agrees with him, because he is the beloved one. The beloved of the Father, his dear son, the son of his love, of whom he has said once and again, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased (Matthew 3:17). Beloved he was by him from all eternity: our Lord testifies this when he says, for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world (John 17:24). He was from all eternity as one brought up with him, rejoicing always before him. He lay in his bosom; a phrase expressive of the most tender affection to him. Beloved he was by him in time, throughout all his meanness, sufferings, and death. He loved him in his infancy: as it is said, When Israel was a child I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt (Hosea 11:1). This respects the Messiah, one of whose names is Israel; whom the Lord loved when he was a child in his infant state in our nature, and who shewed his affection to him by warning Joseph in a dream to take his wife, and the young child, and flee into Egypt. He went and continued there; and when it was a proper time, he was warned again to return into his own land, because they that sought the young child were dead: so the prophecy was fulfilled.

And as he loved him, and manifested it in his infancy, so throughout his whole life. When he was obeying the divine commands, when he was suffering death, still he loved him. Yea, Christ says, Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life (John 10:17). Many declarations there are, of his love to him. He loved him, and therefore put all things into his hands; all persons, angels, and saints; particularly the latter, who are put into his hands as the effect of Jehovah's love to him. The Father loveth, the Son, and hath given all things into his hand (John 3:35). Again: The Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doth—The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father (John 5:20, 22, 23).

Christ, the antitypical David, is not only beloved of God, but also by his people. He is beloved of all those that see the loveliness of his person, and have tasted of his love: these cannot but say of him, "He

is the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely." They know not how better to describe him, than as him whom their souls love. Saw ye him (says the Church) whom my soul loveth (Cant. 3:3)? They love him in his whole person as God-Man: they love him as held forth in all his offices, in all his relations. They love him as he appears in all his truths and ordinances. They love the truths relating to him, that set forth the glory of his person and the riches of his grace. They love him in all his ordinances: they esteem his precepts concerning all things to be right, and hate every false way (Ps. 119:128). They love all his people, rich or poor, high or low, and of whatsoever denomination among men. And they love Christ superlatively above all others, angels, or men; they say, Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth that I desire beside thee (Ps. 73:25). They love him above all natural relations, friends, and acquaintance, be they ever so near and dear to them. He that loveth father or mother (saith the Lord) more than me, is not worthy of me (Matthew 10:37). They love him with all their hearts and with all their souls, with sincerity and uprightness of heart, and can appeal to him as the searcher of hearts, and trier of the reins of the children of men, that as he knows all things, he knows they do love him. These shew their love to him by a regard to his commandments and ordinances. If ye love me (says Christ), keep my commandments (John 14:15). Also by parting with all, and bearing all for his sake by expressing an uneasiness at his absence from them: not being contented till they find him again seeking here and there, and every where for him, and when they have found him they will not let him go—Thus our Lord Jesus Christ answers to the name David, which signifies beloved; he is beloved of his Father, and beloved of his people.

II. He is further described by his lineage and descent, the son of Jesse. He is not described here as the son of Abraham (of whose seed the Jews generally boasted they were), in whom all the nations of the earth were blessed; nor is he described as being of the tribe of Judah, the honourable tribe of Judah, from whom the Messiah was to spring; but he is called the son of Jesse the Bethlehemite. Bethlehem was but a small town, or city, and the family of Jesse, in that city or town, seems of no great note: hence Saul asks his servants, whom he suspected to carry on a private conference

with David, "Will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards, and make you all captains of thousands and captains of hundreds"? (1 Sam.22:7). So Nabal, when applied to at sheep-shearing by David's servants, Who is David? (says he) And who is the son of Jesse? There be many servants now-a-days that break away every man from his master (1 Sam. 25:10). I suppose this must be some runaway man or other. Of so little note were David and his family. Yea, David suggests as much himself, when he says, Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? (2 Sam. 7:18).

Now the Messiah is represented as one that should spring from Jesse: There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots (Isa. 11:1). And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse which shall stand for an ensign of the people (Isa. 11:14); which is to be understood of the Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ, and describes his low and mean estate by lineal descent.

The family of Jesse was raised to great grandeur in David and Solomon: and in after-times a numerous race of kings sprang from them, which ennobled that family, and made it very illustrious, to the times of the Babylonish captivity; but after that, they decreased quite to the times of the Messiah; and it was very low indeed then. The family of Jesse was like a tree cut down to the roots, scarcely any thing of it appeared above ground. Joseph, a poor carpenter, and Mary, a poor virgin, these were the remains of that once famous family from which the Messiah sprang; and they are both represented as very poor. They came to Bethlehem, to which they both belonged, to be taxed there. Mary's time drew near, and there she was delivered of her son: but there was no room for them in the inn, and we may be sure the reason was, because of their meanness; and at the time of her purification, she brought an offering of the meaner sort.

Christ was so mean, that he gave offence to the Jewish nation. They could not think that this person who sprang from them should be king of Israel. Is not this the carpenter's son? (say they) Is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? and his sisters, are they not all with us? (Matthew 13:55, 56). Don't we know them all, what poor, mean persons they are? and they were offended. Such a low condition this family was in, when the

Messiah was born: and he sprang from it, as a root out of a dry ground. His education was agreeable to his birth, He was brought up in an obscure place, Galilee; concerning which, Nathaniel says, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? (John 1:46). He had not been sent so much as to a private school, much less to a University; therefore he was upbraided with it afterwards. How knoweth this man letters, having never learned? (John 7:15). Never been at school. He was not only represented as the carpenter's son; but they say, Is not this the carpenter? (Mark 6:3). It seems he was brought up to trade. O, how low was our Lord brought in our room and stead! He was found in fashion as a man, and in the form of a servant. He who was Lord of all; he to whom the world belonged, and all the fulness of it; yet was obliged to some few persons for his support. — Thus we see the wonderful, amazing grace of our Lord Jesus, "who, though he was rich, and Lord of all, yet for our sakes became poor; that we, through his poverty, might be made rich."

III. David is here described as the man raised up on high; raised from a low estate, to a very exalted one. A low estate David was in when he was anointed King of Israel. When Samuel inquired, if there were any other sons of Jesse, they said, there was another, but he was keeping his father's sheep. Well, he must be sent for; so God took him, as we are told, from the sheep-folds; from following the ewes great with young, he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance (Ps.78:70, 71).

He was raised from a low estate, to a very exalted one. He was first king over the tribe of Judah, then over Benjamin, and then over all the tribes of Israel: yea, he was exalted to be the head of the heathen round about him. In a spiritual sense, like other saints, he was raised as a beggar from the dunghill, set among princes, and made to inherit the throne of glory (1 Sam. 2:8).

In this, he was a type of our Lord Jesus Christ: to Him this character well agrees; the man who was raised up on high. The man. It is a very emphatic article in the original text, which is, in a good measure, preserved in our translation. Not a mere man, or a common man, but, the man. The man that God has chosen; the man of his right hand, as he is called. Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, the Son of man whom thou madest strong for thyself (Ps. 80:17). The

mart of thy right hand; dear to God as his right hand. The man of his right hand; whom he made use of as his right hand in the great work of our salvation. The man of his right hand; whom he supported with the right hand of his righteousness. The man of his right hand; whom God has exalted with his right hand, and at his right hand. The man, his fellow. Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow (Zec.13:7). —Not that Christ, as man, is Jehovah's fellow: but that divine person, to which the human nature is united, is Jehovah's fellow. As man, he was not; as a divine person, he was. He thought it not robbery to be equal with God (Phil.2:6). He has the same nature and divine perfections; the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him. The man, the second man, the Lord from heaven (1 Cor. 15:47); not that he, as man, came down from heaven, as some have thought; no, for as man he was a son of earth, agreeable to a prophecy concerning him. Truth shall spring out of the earth and righteousness shall look down from heaven (Ps. 85:11). —Christ, as man, came from earth; but as God, he came down from heaven: not by local motion, hut by assumption of the human nature. "Came down," not to do his own will; but the will of him that sent him.

"The man," that was chosen above all the individuals of human nature, for the purposes for which he was sent: hence he is said to be chosen out of the people (Ps. 89:19). He pitched upon this one single individual human nature. The human nature of our Lord Jesus Christ he selected from all the rest, and therefore he is said to be his elect: Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth (Isa.42:1). Chosen out from among the people, the choicest, the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely, and was particularly chosen to the grace of union to the divine person of the Son of God, which none other of the human race was. The wonderful extraordinary man, chosen of God to be united to the second person in the blessed Trinity, and therefore bears the same name with him. He shall be great, and shall be called the son of the highest (Luke 1:32); on which account he is truly said to have a more excellent name than the angels, for to which of the angels said he at any time, thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee? (Heb. 1:5). O what a great and wonderful mystery is this, that the Word should be made flesh and dwell among

us!— God manifest in the flesh

The man Christ Jesus was raised up on high, exalted to be a prince and a Saviour: exalted, raised up in union with the divine person of the Son of God, to be a prince, a king and a head over all things to the church. To be the head of principalities and powers, even of angels. It is thought by some that this gave offence to the apostate spirits. Understanding that the Son of God in human nature must be head over them, and principalities and powers become subject to him: they rebelled, left their first habitation, would have nothing to do with this Son of God, if he must be exalted as head over them in human nature. Let this be as it may, he is exalted to be a prince, a head over all things to the church, and to be the Saviour of the body thereof: he was made of a woman, made under the law to redeem them that were under the law (Gal. 4:4, 5). He was fore-ordained to be the redeemer and Saviour of men, by the shedding of his precious blood in human nature: this was the man raised up on high.

When he had gone through his state of humiliation here on earth, God highly exalted him, and gave him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father (Phil. 2:9, 10, 11). He ascended up on high, even far above all, and is set down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, in the highest place he possibly could have, the right hand of God, which was never allowed to any creature whatever, for "to which of the angels said he at anytime, Sit on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool?" (Heb. 1:13). But Christ in our nature is there. The man united to the divine person of the Son of God. The man raised up on high, and who when he ascended received gifts for men: or, received gifts in Adam; as it is in the original text. Received gifts in the human nature in which he ascended. Received gifts, for what? for qualifying men for public work and service in the ministration of the gospel: and has given them unto men, more or less, in all succeeding generations. And he is not only exalted to give these gifts unto men, but common grace also (if I may so call it), or such grace as is common to all the people of God; for as he is exalted to be a prince and a Saviour, so to give repentance unto Israel and remission of sins

(Acts 5:31): to give every grace, and every blessing of grace unto his people. Now what an honour is the human nature raised up unto into union with the divine person of the Son of God, in that it is raised up to bestow all extraordinary and ordinary gifts! All extraordinary, bestowed on Apostles, Prophets, and Teachers: all ordinary, bestowed upon Ministers in every age, and all grace bestowed upon the people of God in common.

Once more: He is exalted to be the Judge of the whole world. God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he has ordained (Acts 17:31); or, by Christ in human nature. He is the man, that is raised up on high for that service: to be the Judge of the whole earth; to be the judge of quick and dead: he will appear in human nature, and every eye shall see him: he will appear most glorious and magnificent: he will come in his own glory, in his Father's glory, and in the glory of all the holy angels.—Thus he is the man raised up on high.

IV. David is here described as the anointed of the God of Jacob: that is, anointed by the order of the God of Jacob. Samuel was ordered to anoint him, and he did: and he was afterwards anointed king over Judah; and after that he was anointed to be king over all Israel. The anointed of the God of Jacob. He shewed himself to be the God of Jacob and Israel, by appointing such a king to rule over them.

In this also David was a type of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is anointed with the Holy Ghost. God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost (Acts 10:38), called the oil of gladness with which he is said to be anointed above his fellows (Heb.1:9), for he received the Spirit without measure. Anointed he is said to be by the Lord, therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee (Ps. 45:7). Jehovah hath done it, who also anointeth all that believe. And do you ask when he was anointed? I answer, he was anointed from all eternity. In Proverbs the eighth it is said, I was set up from everlasting: it is in the original text, I was anointed. The phrase expresses his being appointed unto, or invested with, the office of Mediator. He might be said to be anointed from everlasting as such. All the grace of his people, all that was designed to be bestowed upon them, were put into his hands. He was possessed in the beginning of God's way with a fulness

of grace for all his people: hence we are said to have grace given us in Christ Jesus before the world began (2 Tim. 1:9). He was anointed with the Holy Ghost from his birth; for if John the Baptist is said to be filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb (Luke 1:15), our Lord Jesus Christ may well be thought to be so. At his baptism it was more apparent when the Spirit of God rested upon him, whereby John knew he was the Messiah. This was the sign given him whereby he should know that he was the

Messiah. He was declared to be Lord and Christ, or more manifestly anointed when he received the gifts and grace to be bestowed upon his people in future ages and generations.

He was anointed with the Holy Spirit, his gifts and grace as man and mediator, as prophet, priest, and king. The Prophets used to be anointed: hence Elijah had orders to anoint Elisha (1 Kings 19:16). Christ is anointed as a prophet. The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me, for what? why to preach glad tidings to the meek (Isa.61:1): and his people, who have their anointing from him, are taught all things. Christ as a priest, consecrated for evermore, was anointed with gifts and graces of the Spirit above measure. The oil or ointment poured upon Aaron's head, which ran down to the skirts of his garments, was an emblem or type of the abundance of the gifts and graces of the Spirit bestowed on Christ as our great high priest. Kings also were anointed to their office, as David, Solomon, and others; so Christ was anointed as king, I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion (Ps. 2:6): it is in the original, I have anointed my king. Hence it is that Christ has the name of the Messiah, or anointed one; and his followers have the same, receiving from him that anointing which teacheth all things.

V. David is described as the sweet Psalmist of Israel. And this title and epithet is given him, because he composed most part of the book of Psalms under the inspiration of the Spirit of God. He also invented the tunes to which they were set, and the instruments of music with which they were sung; hence you read of some that invented instruments of music like David (Amos 6:5). He also appointed persons to preside in this service, and to give instruction therein, of which you have a large account in the 1 Chronicles 15 and 25. And psalmody, as I have already observed,

was never raised to so great a pitch, respecting the outward administration of it, as in David's time; so that he might with great propriety be called the sweet psalmist of Israel: though the words will bear another reading, and perhaps a better: And the sweet or pleasant one, in the psalms or songs of Israel; that is, David was the sweet and delightful subject of the songs of Israel. He was the person that the people in their songs with great pleasure dwelt upon, of which you have an instance in his youthful time: when they came forth in their songs, and dances, and said, "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands" (1 Sam. 18:7).

In this also he was a type of our Lord Jesus Christ. The sweet and delightful psalms of David were composed under the influence of the Messiah, as iii verse the third, The God of Israel said, the rock of Israel spake to me: the Lord Jesus, the Rock of Israel spake by him, and by his Spirit indited the psalms he was the penman of. The Spirit of Christ in him, spake of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory which should follow. Our Lord Jesus Christ might be particularly stilled the sweet psalmist of Israel, when he sung the praises of God in the great congregation; when he with his disciples, at the institution of the supper, sung an hymn: he began, he led on the disciples, and sung within them; O what a delightful sound was that, could it have been heard by us! the Messiah, the sweet psalmist of Israel singing the psalms of David!—The hallel or hymn which the Jews sung at their Passover, was none other than the psalms of David, the 113th to the 118th. These psalms he sung with his disciples, and then he was the sweet psalmist of Israel. Moreover, he has ordered that psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs should be sung by his people. Christ speaking in me, says the apostle (2 Cor. 13:3); so that what is written by him may be said to be spoken by Christ; and in his epistles there are orders given to sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs—Speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord (Eph. 5:19). And in another epistle it is said, Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord (Col. 3:16): this is the order of the great psalmist of Israel, our Lord Jesus Christ.

But particularly as David was the sweet, the delightful subject of time songs of Israel; so our Lord Jesus Christ is the sweet, the delightful subject of the hook of Psalms: we have his own authority for it; for we are told that he expounded unto his disciples in all the scriptures, the things concerning himself, and said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me (Luke 24:44). O how do they speak of Jesus! He is the subject of these songs, in most, if not in all of them; in great abundance, there you hear of him, and there he is set forth in the most delightful and glorious strains. There you read of the covenant of grace made with this our David, before the world was, and which can never be broken (Ps. 89). There you read of his sufferings, and of his death, in the most lively descriptions of it especially in the 22nd Psalm, where he is represented in the greatest agonies, all his bones being dislocated or out of joint, as at his crucifixion; and the most minute circumstances are mentioned, as parting his garments among them, and casting lots upon his vesture. There you read of his resurrection from the dead; how that God would not suffer his Holy One, when in the grave, to lay so long as to see corruption, but shewed him the path of life (Ps. 16:10, 11). There you read of his ascension, and session at the right hand of God, and of his second coming to judgment, to judge the world in righteousness, and the people with his truth (Ps. 96:13). There you read of him as the priest of God. The Lord hath sworn, and will not re pent: thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek (Ps. 110:4). There you read of him as being a sacrifice, and offering up his body (Ps. 40:6, &c.). There you read of him as the great prophet of Israel, not concealing truth and righteousness, and loving kindness from the great congregation (Ps. 40:9, 10). There you read of him as the anointed king, made higher than the kings of the earth—in short, there you read of him in all his offices. But I close all with a remark or two.

All that has been said may serve to endear our Lord Jesus Christ unto us. He is the true David, the beloved one. He is the anointed of the God of Jacob, the sweet psalmist of Israel, or the sweet subject of the songs of Israel. All this, I say, may serve to endear him to us;

for however he may be disallowed of men, yet he is the chosen of God and precious; and he is so, and ought to be so, to all them that believe.

This may also serve to recommend unto us the reading of David's psalms, for Christ is the sum and substance of them. There is not only a rich fund of experience in these psalms, but a rich display of Christ in all his offices, in all his sufferings, and in all his grace. It may also serve to recommend unto us the singing of these psalms, which, no doubt, were designed to be sung by the churches of Christ under the gospel dispensation, since they are so full of him. And this may serve also to excite our attention to what follows: which the words I have now been upon are only a preface to. Now since here is so grand a description given us of David, and so of his Antitype, let it induce us to pay a regard to what really are the last words of so great a personage. These we shall consider in some subsequent discourses, as the Lord shall give opportunity.

3 Levi's Urim And Thummim Found With Christ,

A Sermon

DEUTERONOMY 33:8

And of Levi he said, Let thy Thummim, and thy Urim be with thy holy One, whom thou didst prove at Massah, and with whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah.

These words are part of the blessing wherewith Moses blessed the tribe of Levi, when he blessed that and the other tribes a little before his death. He was a man eminently raised up by God for much good to the people of Israel; he was a glorious instrument in God's hand, to deliver them out of Egyptian bondage; and was a guide, a governor, a legislator, nay, a father to them in the wilderness; but having unadvisedly spoke with his lips concerning them, it went ill with him for their sakes; so that he was not allowed to enter into the land of Canaan; but, as in the latter part of the preceding chapter, he is bid to go up to mount Nebo, and take a prospect of the promised land and die.

Moses, thus having notice of the time of his departure being at hand, and having a real affection and concern for this people, by a prophetic spirit, blesses the several tribes, verse 1. This is the blessing wherewith Moses, the man of God, blessed the children of Israel before his death, And prefaces his benediction with observing the wonderful love of

God to that people, in giving them a law by his hands, which was delivered in so august and magnificent a manner, verses 2-5. And he said, The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shinned forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand went a fiery law for them. Yea, he loved the people; all his saints are in thy hand: and they sat down at thy feet; every one shall receive of thy words. Moses commanded us a law even the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob. And he was king in Jeshurun, when the heads of the people and the tribes of Israel were gathered together. And then he proceeds particularly to bless the tribes, beginning with Reuben, verse 6, who was Jacobs firstborn; but had forfeited his birth-right by his sin. Judah, in verse 7 is blessed next, who, though the fourth son, is blessed in the second place, because to his tribe belonged the kingdom, and from thence was the Messiah to arise, one of whose characters is, the lion of the tribe of Judah; and, perhaps, all that is said in this blessing may very well be applied to him. In the next place comes Levi, in the words I have read, Simeon his brother in iniquity, being wholly omitted; And of Levi he said, Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy holy one, whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah. Which words I intend, by divine assistance, to open and explain. But I must entreat your patience a little, whilst I remove the difficulties of the text; which I shall endeavor to do.

First, By giving some account of the Urim and Thummim.

Secondly, By shewing who the person is whom Moses intends, and points at, in these words, to whom the Urim and Thummim belong.

First, I shall endeavour to give some account of the Urim and Thummim. The first mention that is made of them, is in Exodus 28:30. And than shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim, and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the Lord; and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the Lord continually. The words Urim and Thummim are by the Septuagint rendered a manifestation and truth; though they may be much better translated lights and perfections; as they are by Aquilla, in Leviticus 8:8 and are frequently applied, by divines, to that light of knowledge and integrity of life, which are requisite characters in every minister of Christ; but

what these Urim and Thummim were, is not so easy a thing to determine: Some of the Jewish Rabbi have ingenuously confessed, that they knew not what they were, and some of our Christian interpreters have thought it safest to leave them as things unknown, and not conclude anything certainly about them; though the scripture seems to speak of them as things well known; and an inquiry into them is nowhere forbidden; therefore we shall attempt it at this time.

There has been a variety of opinions concerning them, which particularly to enumerate, and enter into the consideration of, would be both tedious, and to little purpose, one thinks that these two words, Urim and Thummim were engraven on a stone, or a plate of gold, and put into the breast-plate, even as those words, Holiness to the Lord, were engraven on a plate of gold, and fastened, by a blue lace, to the front of Aaron's mitre. Another is of opinion (Calvin in Ex. 28:4), that they were two famous and remarkable characters in the breast-plate, which suited with those names: Others have supposed, that this was the writing of Shemhamphorash, that is, the name Jehovah (which the Jews say is unlawful to be pronounced but by the high-priest when he entered into the holy of Holies) which name, either by itself, or with other divine names, explanative of it, were put into, or engraven on the breast-plate; and this way go most of the Jewish doctors. Others have imagined, that they were little images, which the high priest carried about with him in the folds of the breast-plate, and as often as he inquired concerning anything, God, or an angel in the name of God, did by these, answer very clearly and distinctly, what was to be done, or not to be done; and that, because of the perspicuity and certain completion of the answers, the one was called Urim, and the other Thummim; and that, whilst the priest was inquiring, the images glistened and appeared very bright, to fix the people's attention, and raise their admiration: they also imagine, that these images are the same with the Teraphim made mention of in many places of scripture with the ephod, but never in a good sense; for they were idols which the Jews, who were a people prone to idolatry, had learned to worship of the nations; and they seem to be household gods, such as the Lares or Penates among the Romans; wherefore it cannot be supposed that these were the Urim and Thummim which were put into the breast-plate, because it would have been directly contrary

to the second commandment. Others have been of opinion, that these were a work purely divine, not made by Bezaleel or any other artificer, but by God himself, as the two tables of stone were, on which the law was engraven: and that God gave these to Moses, and he put them into the breast-plate; though of what form and matter they were they will no more pretend to tell, that they would of what stone the two tables were made.

But the opinion, which at present I am most inclined to come into, is, that the Urim and Thummim were no other than the twelve stones in the breast-plate, on which were engraven the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, and that these were called Urim, because they were clear, lucid, and transparent; and Thummim, because they were perfect and complete, had no blemish or defect in them: what induces me to embrace and prefer this opinion to all others, is, because in Exodus 34, where there is a particular account given of all the priest's vestments, and more especially of the breast-plate and the things appertaining thereunto, there is mention made of the twelve stones, but no notice taken of the Urim and Thummim: now if the Urim and Thummim had been anything different from the stones, Moses would not have omitted the mention of them, seeing he takes notice of things more minute than these: and as also, in Leviticus 8:8 where is given the like account, mention is made of the Urim and Thummim, and no notice taken of the stones, which is a further confirmation of this opinion. Likewise, I find some of the most learned of the Jewish writers are of the same opinion, particularly Josephus, whose testimony must go a great way in this matter, seeing he lived while the second temple stood, was by sect a Pharisee, by profession a priest, and of the blood royal; and therefore no doubt, had all the opportunities and advantages of informing himself in these affairs.

Having thus considered what they were, let us now observe what was the use of them, which I apprehend to be twofold.

I. The names of the twelve tribes of Israel being engraven on them, they were borne on Aaron's heart, when he went into the holy place on the day of atonement, for a memorial before the Lord, so that what Aaron then did, more especially, he did, not in his own name, but in the name of the whole congregation of Israel; he acted as their representative, when he slew the sacrifice, and carried the blood within the veil, for

it was not only for himself, but for all the people.

II. By these, the high priest consulted God for the people in matters of moment; thus we read in Numbers 27:21, And he (that is, Joshua) shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall ask counsel for him after the judgment of Urim before the Lord; at his word shall they go out, and at his word shall they come in, both he and all the children of Israel with him, even all the congregation. Consultation by Urim and Thummim was made by the priest only, but not without having on the Ephod, and generally before the ark of the covenant; not for private persons and for private affairs or for things trivial, but for public persons, and in matters of moment. And so we read, in the Misnah, They inquire by Urim and Thummim, but they do not inquire by these .for a private person, but for a king, and for the house of judgment, and for him whom the congregation needeth.

This was certainly a very great favor, which God indulged this people with, that they could thus have recourse unto him on emergent occasions; and it was an evidence of God's displeasure to Saul, when he would not answer him, either by dreams, or by Urim, or by Prophets: How long those things continued in use, is not so well known. The Talmudists say, That king ,Josiah hid the Urim and Thummim under ground in a cave, before prepared by Solomon, together with the anointing oil, the ark of the covenant, Aaron's rod, and the pot of Manna, and that these things could not be found when they returned from Babylon; therefore tell us that these five things were wanting in the second temple, namely, 1. The ark with the mercy-seat, and cherubims. 2. The fire from heaven which burnt up the sacrifice. 3. The Shechinah, or the divine presence. 4. The holy Ghost, or Spirit of prophecy. 5. The Urim and Thummim. And in the Misnah they say, "After the death of the former prophets the Urim and Thummim ceased." Maimonides indeed says, that the Urim and Thummim were made in the second temple, though not used; his words are these, "They made in the second temple Urim and Thummim, to the end, they might make up all the eight ornaments, although they did not inquire by them: and wherefore did they not inquire by them? because the holy Ghost was not there." Josephus says, that the shining of these stones had ceased two hundred years before he wrote his Antiquities; and it is manifest from scripture, that the Jews were without them when they returned

from Babylon, as appears from Ezra,(2:63) And the Tirshatha, that is, Nehemiah, said unto them, that they should not eat of the most holy things, till there stood up a priest with Urim and with Thummim. This shews the deficiency and imperfection of the Levitical priesthood, and what need there was of another priest to arise with the true Urim and Thummim, not after Aaron's order, but after the order of Melehizedek.

But now let us consider a little, in what way and manner God was pleased to return answers by Urim and Thummim.

The Jews generally say, it was by the extraordinary brightness and protuberance of some of the letters upon the stones, which swelling, and appearing higher and brighter than others, either altogether, or one after another, the priest could read the answer which should be returned: but there not being a complete alphabet in the names of the twelve tribes, they added the names of the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and this not being sufficient, they added these words, Col Elle Shibte Israel, "All these are the tribes of Israel." Here being now a complete alphabet, they suppose an answer might be returned this way upon any affair that was consulted about.

Others, that the priests knew the mind and will of God, by the brightness or dullness of the stones; that if the stones were bright, the answer was in the affirmative; if dull, in the negative; and so they returned the answer to the people.

Others have been of opinion, that the priest, when he went and asked counsel of God, having on the breast-plate and the Urim and Thummim it, God was pleased to enlighten his understanding, and fix in his mind a firm persuasion of the truth of the answer intended, and accordingly he returned it.

But I am most inclined to think, that God gave the answer by a distinct and articulate voice; my reasons for it are, because in Numbers, when the priest asked counsel of God, it is said, at his word, or at his mouth, that is, of the Lord, Shall they go out, and at his word, or mouth, Shall they come in (Num. 27:21); and in all the instances we have of inquiry, being made by Urim and Thummim, the answers, as they appear to me, were given this way: Thus, after Joshua's death, when the people of Israel inquired of the Lord, saying, Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites? The Lord said Judah shall go up (Judges 27:21); And when David ordered, Abiathar the priest to bring the Ephod

to hint, and he inquired of the Lord, saying, Will Saul come down? And the Lord said he will come down: Then said David, Will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul? And the Lord said they will deliver thee up (1 Sam. 23:11, 12).

Thus I have endeavored to give you some account of rue Urim and Thummim, which I suppose to be the twelve stones in the breast-plate, on which were engraven the names of the twelve tribes of Israel; one whereof use whereof, was, by them to ask counsel of God' in matters of moment; and. the answer was given to the priest, by a distinct and articulate voice, he having on the breast-plate at that time, with these stones in it.

Secondly, I shall now proceed to show, who the person is, whom Moses intends, and points at, in these words, to whom the Urim and Thummim belong. And here are two things spoken of him, which maybe a direction to us in finding out the person intended. 1st, He was God's holy One. 2dly, He was proved at Massah, and strove with? at the waters of Meribah.

1st, Both these are true of Aaron; he was an holy man, had the principles of grace and holiness wrought in his soul, and lived an holy life and conversation, and therefore he is called the saint of the Lord; they envied Moses also in the camp, and Aaron the saint of the Lord (Ps. 106:15). He was also proved at Massah, and strove with at the waters of Meribah; which may he referred either to God, or to the Israelites proving him: God proved him at Massah, or tempted him in, or with a temptation, as the words may be read. Even as he is said to tempt Abraham, so he may be here said to tempt Aaron; But how? Why, by suffering the people of Israel gather together against him and Moses, and to murmur against them for want of water. But how did it go with Aaron in this temptation, 6r trial of his faith and patience? All the three Targums, on the place, gave it in his praise, that he stood in the temptation, was perfect, and was found faithful: But this doth not seem so well to agree to the account in Numbers, where it is said, And the Lord spake to Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them. This is the water of Meribah, because the children of Israel strove with the Lord: And he was sanctified in them (Num. 20:12).

It seems from hence, that he did not stand in the

temptation; and therefore God strove and contended with him; that is, blamed him, and shewed manifest tokens of his displeasure at his carriage and behavior; or else the words may be referred to the tribe of Levi, who, with the rest, of the Israelites, tempted and strove with Moses and Aaron at these places; though some of the Jewish writers exempt the tribe of Levi, and say, that they murmured not with the other murmurers.

2dly, These two characters in the text may very well be applied to the Lord Jesus Christ: the character of an holy One well suits with him; he is so both as God and man; he is the man thy holy One, as the words may be rendered; he was so in his conception and birth, and therefore called that holy thing; holy he was in his nature, and in all the actions of his life, and therefore a proper person for the Urim and Thummim to be with, and a suitable high priest for us; for such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, made higher than the heavens (Heb. 7:26); of him also it may be truly said, that he was proved at Massah, and strove with at the waters of Meribah; for the Israelites not only tempted and strove with Moses and Aaron, but they tempted and strove with the Lord Jehovah; Thus in Exodus we read, that Moses said unto them, Why chide ye with me? Wherefore do ye tempt the Lord (Ex. 17:2)? And in verse 7 he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the Lord; saying, Is the Lord among us or not? And in Numbers, This is the water of Meribah, because the children of Israel strove with the Lord, and he was sanctified in them (Num. 20:13). Now, who was this Lord; this Jehovah, whom they tempted and strove with after this manner? He was no other than the angel who was sent to conduct them through the wilderness, the Angel of God's presence, the Lord Jesus Christ, as appears from 1 Corinthians 10:9, Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. So that Christ is the holy One who is more especially intended here, who was tempted and strove with at Massah and Meribah; therefore to him the true Urim and Thummim belong. And the words may be thus paraphrased, And of Levi, that is, of the tribe of Levi, he said, Let thy Thummim and thy Urim (or thy lights and thy perfections, O God) be with thy holy One, Christ Jesus, whom thou, O Levi, with the rest of the tribes of Israel, didst tempt at Massah, and strive

with at the waters of Meribah. Thus having opened the words, and endeavored to remove the difficulties of the text, I shall in the following observation, give you what I conceive is intended therein, namely,

That the true Urim and Thummim are with God's holy One, Christ Jesus; or, What was meant and typified by the Urim and Thummim, is to be found fully and complete in Christ.

And in speaking hereunto I shall,

I. Endeavour to shew, how the Urim and Thummim are with Christ according to the significance of the words.

II. How they may be applied unto him, with regard to the use of them.

I. I will endeavour to shew, how the Urim and the Thummim may be said to be with Christ, according to the significance of the words. The words, as I have already observed, signify, lights and perfections: now, all light and perfection are in Christ; it hath pleased the Father, that in him should all fullness dwell (Col. 1:19). Fulness and perfection of all that is great and glorious, valuable and precious, are to be found in him; in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col. 2:3).

1st, The Urim is with Christ; all light is in Christ, and from him. As all that light which was created on the first day, and disseminated throughout the whole creation until the fourth day, is in that great luminary the sun; so all that light which is dispersed among the creatures, is, in its full perfection, in Christ, who is the Sun of righteousness and as all bodies, celestial and terrestrial, have their light from the sun, so all creatures have their light from Christ, who is the light of the world. There is a threefold light, that is in, and is communicated to us from Christ; the light of nature, grace, and glory.

(1.) The light of nature is from Christ. The light of nature, in fallen man, must needs fall short of what it was in man in a state of innocence, yet it is not wholly lost, but there are some remains of it in him; which, though not sufficient to save him, yet are enough to leave him without excuse; for, by this light of nature, he may arrive to the knowledge of a divine Being; seeing the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and godhead, so that they are without excuse (Rom. 1:20). He may hereby know, that this divine Being is

possessed of great and glorious perfections, that he is to be worshipped and adored by him; he may hereby in some measure know the difference between good and evil, as the apostle observes in his epistle to the Romans; For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law to themselves, which shew the work of the law written in their hearts; their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing, or else excusing one another (Rom. 2:14, 15).

Also, he may in some measure know how to conduct himself as a rational creature in this world. Now all this light, is from Christ; for, as we are told by the evangelist John, he is the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world (John 1:9); but every man that comes into the world, is not lighted with the light of grace, or the light of glory; and therefore it is the light of nature which is there intended; for John is not speaking of Christ, as the author of the new, but as the author of the old creation: for he tells us, that all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men (John 1:3&4): So that as we have our natural being, and our natural life, from Christ, as a creator, from him also we have our natural light, as such.

(2.) The light of grace is from Christ. The light of grace is that whereby a poor sinner, who was darkness itself, being born, and brought up in darkness, and having lived and, walked in darkness, is now made light in the Lord; so that he sees his depraved, miserable, and lost state by nature; as also, the necessity, as well as fulness, glory, and suitableness, of salvation by Christ; and can say, as the poor man did, One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see (John 9:25). The work of grace upon the heart of a sinner, consists much in his being called out of darkness into marvelous light, marvelous and surprising light indeed The characters they bear, who are thus called by divine grace, are children of the light and of the day; for they are no more children of the night, or of darkness; for the darkness is past, and the true light now shines. Now all this light is from Christ: If any souls have, this light, it is he that gives it to them; Christ shall give thee light. If any are called to this marvelous light, it is by him; if any are made light, it is in or by the Lord Christ; for he is given by God the Father to be a light to lighten the

Gentiles, as well as to be the glory of his people Israel. For this light of grace includes in it the light of the knowledge of the divine perfections, the light of the knowledge of Christ, and the light of the knowledge of gospel truths; and all these are in and from Christ.

1. The light of the knowledge of the divine perfections, is in and from Christ, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, that is, of the glorious perfections of God, is given to us in the face, or person, of Christ Jesus. It is true, God has discovered his perfections in the works of creation and providence; for, the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy-work (Ps.19:1). There is a glorious shine of his power, wisdom, goodness, &c. upon them, but there is a far more glorious display of the divine perfections in him, who is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person. For in the contrivance of salvation by him, the depths of wisdom and knowledge are discovered; in the mission of him, the exceeding riches of his love, grace and mercy, are laid open; in his accomplishment of the work, the arm of almighty power is made bare; and in the sufferings which he underwent, in our room and stead, the glories of divine faithfulness, justice and holiness, are surprisingly displayed; here mercy and truth are met together, and righteousness and peace have kissed each other (Ps. 85:10). Here is no clashing among the divine perfections, but a sweet and an entire harmony among each other, all shining forth with equal glory and lustre in man's salvation. Now, this is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent (John 17:3); that is, to know God in Christ. The Heathens may know him in the creatures, but they cannot know him in Christ without a divine revelation and that revelation must be attended with a supernatural light; which light must come from Christ himself.

2. The light of the knowledge of Christ is from himself, for it is in his light we see light. As we see the sun in its own light, and it is impossible for us to see it any other light than its own; so we see Christ, the Sun of righteousness, in his own light; and it is impossible for us to see him in any other; it is in his own light we see him as the eternal Son of God, as the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person: It is in his own light we see him as the mediator between God and man, as the Saviour of sinners; that salvation is in him, and in no other; that

it is in vain to expect it from hills and mountains; for truly, and alone, in our God is the salvation of Israel. It is in his own light we see the glory and efficacy of his atoning sacrifice, whereby he has put away sin, and perfected for ever them that are sanctified. It is in his own light we see the efficacy of his precious blood, whereby the remission of our sins is obtained, and our souls are washed and cleansed from all sin, and our consciences purged from dead works to serve the living God. It is in his own light we see the completeness of his justifying righteousness, which is revealed in the gospel from faith to faith, and by which we are justified from all things from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses. It is in his own light we see those immense treasures of grace and glory which lie hid in his person; we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten; and one main branch of that glory consists in his being full of grace and truth (John 1:14).

3. The light of the knowledge of gospel truths is from Christ; it is he that opens our understanding that we may understand the scriptures. It is he that gives us to know the mysteries of the kingdom. It is he that sends his spirit as the spirit of truth, to lead us into all truth; otherwise the Bible would be a sealed book to us, a book full of riddles: the truths and doctrines contained therein would be as parables, and dark sayings. David knew this full well, and therefore prays after this manner, Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law (Ps. 119:18).

(3.) As the light of nature and grace is from Christ, so likewise is the light of glory. Heaven is represented to us a lightsome place; it is called, the inheritance of the saints in light (Col. 1:12); and all that light that fills it, is from Christ. That city hath no need of the sun, nor of the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God lightens it, and the Lamb is the light thereof (Rev. 21:23). When you are safely arrived there, all darkness of infidelity, doubts and fears, will then be dispelled, and your souls will be irradiated with those beams and rays of light from Christ, which will for ever strike you with wonder and pleasure: then shall you behold his glory, and see him as he is: then shall the sun be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light to thee, but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory; thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting

light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended (Isa.60:19, 20). Thus the Urim is with Christ; all light of nature, grace and glory, is in him, and from him.

2dly, The Thummim is with Christ; all perfections are in him, he includes and comprehends all.

1. All divine perfections are in him; in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Whatever perfection is in the Deity, is to be found in Christ; whatever is a divine perfection, he is possessed of. Is eternity a divine perfection? It is in Christ; he is the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end; which is, and which was, and which is to come (Rev. 1:8). Is omnipotence a divine perfection? It is in Christ; he is the Almighty. Is omniscience a divine perfection? It is in Christ; he needeth not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man (John 2:25); and therefore Peter appealed to him, as the heart-searching, and rein-trying God: and said, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee (John 21:17). Is omnipresence a divine perfection? It is in Christ; therefore he says, where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them (Matt. 18:20). Is immutability a divine perfection? It is in Christ; he is Jesus, the same yesterday, today and for ever (Heb. 13:8). In short, is there any other divine perfection? It is in him; he is possessed of all, and therefore is the true God, and eternal life.

2. A perfection of the gifts of the Spirit is in him. God has not given the Spirit by measure to him; with this oil of gladness is he anointed above his fellows; which like the precious ointment on Aaron's head, that ran down to the skirts of his garments, descends from him to all the members of his body, in their measure. All those gifts of the Spirit, which are to be found in men, come from Jesus Christ. There was a very large measure of the gifts of the Spirit bestowed upon the apostles at the day of Pentecost, but from whom did they receive it? From an ascended Lord and King; as is manifest from what the apostle Peter says in the Acts; Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, that is Christ being exalted by the right hand of God, and having received of the Father the promise of the Spirit, he hath shed forth this which you now see and hear (Acts 2:33). This he did both as a fruit and evidence of his being ascended on high, and of his having received gifts for men.

3. A perfection of all grace is in Christ; he is said

to be full of grace, of all sorts of grace needful for the believer: and therefore we should be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus; which is in him to its full perfection, and which the believer will always find sufficient for him. Particularly there is a perfection of justifying and sanctifying grace in Christ.

(1.) There is a perfection of justifying grace in Christ; there is a perfect righteousness in him; he is not only righteous as he is God, and as he is God's servant, but he is also Jehovah our righteousness; which righteousness was wrought out by him, and is imputed by the Father, and applied by the Spirit to us; it is every way complete and perfect; it is sufficient for all the elect; it is a garment down to the foot, covering the meanest members in Christ's mystical body; and by it are they justified from all things, be those all things what they will; they are acquitted and discharged from all sin and condemnation by it, and stand in it complete and irreproveable in the sight of God.

(2.) There is a perfection of sanctifying grace in Christ; perfect holiness is in him; from him must we have our holiness, as well as our righteousness, we stand in need of an holy nature, as well as of a justifying righteousness; and as without the one, so neither without the other can we enter into the kingdom of heaven; for without holiness no man shall see the Lord (Heb. 12:14); no, not without a perfect one. From whence now must we have perfect holiness? from ourselves we cannot expect it, but from Christ, who has purchased and procured it for us, and has now all the holiness of his people in his hands, and is giving it forth unto them, that they may be perfectly meet for the eternal enjoyment of himself, who of God is made unto them sanctification, us well as righteousness.

4. The perfection of all covenant blessings and promises is in him: The blessings of the everlasting covenant are upon the head, and in the hands of our Joseph, who was separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; therefore whatever blessing we are blessed with, whether it be with the pardon of sin, or with a justifying righteousness, or with any other, we have them from Christ; hence we have reason to say with the apostle, blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus (Eph. 1:3). And as all blessings, so all promises are in Christ; they are all in him, yea, and in him amen,

to the glory of God, by us (2 Cor. 1:20); there is a perfection of them in him; so that the believer cannot come under any case or circumstance of life, but there is a promise in Christ, suitable for him, had he but faith to view it, and lay hold upon it.

5. Perfection of all light and life, strength and wisdom, joy and comfort, is in Christ. That the perfection of all light is in Christ, I have shown already; and as all light so all life is in him; for with him is the fountain of life, from whence all the streams of life flow. If you ask, how came it to be in Christ? I answer, he did, in the everlasting counsels of peace, ask it of his Father for all his seed, and he granted him his request; as it is said, he asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and ever (Ps. 21:4). Thus he came to have life in himself, as mediator for the elect, and to have a right to dispose of it to as many as the Father gave to him: and for this purpose did he come into the world, to remove obstacles out of the way, that the streams of life might run freely; that so we might have it, and have it more abundantly than ever Adam had in innocence, or the angels now have in heaven. Also perfection of strength is in Christ; we are poor, weak creatures, in ourselves, yet there is strength as well as righteousness for us in him he is the man of God's right hand, whom he has made strong, not only for himself, but for us; so that though we are incapable of doing anything of ourselves, yet we can do all things through Christ strengthening us. There is likewise a perfection of wisdom in him, not only for himself, to qualify him for the discharge of every branch of the mediatorial office, but also for us, to direct and guide us in all our ways through this wilderness, he is the wisdom of God, and the wisdom of God for us; for he, of God, is made unto us wisdom, as well as sanctification and righteousness. There is moreover, a perfection of joy and comfort in Christ; there is always matter of rejoicing in him, his person, blood, and righteousness, are a sufficient ground for the same: There is always an abounding of consolation in him; for as our sufferings, our trials, our reproaches, and calumnies, which are cast upon us, for the sake of Christ, abound; so our consolation abounds by him; and whatever comfort comes any other way, there is just reason to suspect it is ill-grounded. Thus the Thummim is with Christ, as well as the Urim, all perfection is in him. So much for the first thing.

II. I shall now inquire how the Urim and Thummim may be applied to Christ, in respect to the use of them. I have already observed a two fold use thereof: the first was that upon these stones, that is, the Urim and Thummim, were engraven the names of the twelve tribes of Israel which the high priest bore upon his heart, when he went into the holy place, or a memorial before the Lord; from whence we may observe these two things.

First, That the elect of God lie near the heart of Christ, the great High priest; for as the names of the twelve tribes were engraven on these stones, and borne upon Aaron's heart: so are all God's elect engraven On the heart of Christ; not only upon the palms of his hands, but upon his heart, as the church in Solomon's song desired; saying, Set me as a seal upon thine heart (Cant. 8:6): they lay near his heart, and were the objects of his love from eternity; he was not only rejoicing in and with, and before his Father, but also in the habitable parts of the earth, in the views of that part of the earth which he knew would be so, and where his elect should dwell; and his delights were with the sons of men, even before the earth was made, or the highest part of the dust of the world was formed: They lay near his heart when he died for them, and there they still lie, and ever will do so.

Secondly, That what Christ did, who is our high priest, with Urim and Thummim, he did it as our representative, in our name, and in our room and stead; even as Aaron, when he slew the sacrifice on the day of atonement, and carried the blood within the vail, did it in the name of the whole congregation; so when Christ offered up himself a sacrifice, he did it in our name, and for our sins: Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us (1 Cor. 5:7); and this was received by the Father, as an offering and a sacrifice of a sweet smelling savor on our account; and now he is entered into the holy place by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption for us. It is, with the names of all the elect, engraven upon his heart; he is entered into heaven as a forerunner for them; he is gone before to take possession of glory in their name, as well as to prepare it for them; and therefore they are said now to sit together in heavenly places in him (Eph. 2:6); what he receives there, he receives in their name; what he does he does in their name; and on their account, he appears in the presence of God for them. So much for the first use of the Urim and Thummim.

The second was, that with these the priest asked counsel of God for the people in matters of moment. This may represent unto us Christ's acting for us as an Intercessor, Advocate, or Counselor, one of whose titles in Isaiah is the Counselor (Isa. 9:6); or, as the Septuagint translates it, The Angel of the great council; he acted as such, in the great council that was held between the eternal Three, concerning man's salvation; and has acted as such ever since; he now pleads our cause, removes all charges, answers all accusations, consults our interest, and acts the whole part of an advocate for us; If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous (1 John 2:1). But let us consider a little more particularly, how these things may be applied to Christ.

1. None but the high priest might ask counsel of God by Urim and Thummim; Joshua must stand before Eleazar the priest who shall ask counsel for him at the judgment of Urim before the Lord (Num. 27:22); so none but the Lord Jesus Christ is the believer's counselor, advocate, intercessor and mediator; no angels nor saints departed; for there is but one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus (1 Tim. 2:5). As there is but one mediator of redemption, so there is but one mediator of intercession; so that when we want counsel and advice, we must employ him: when we want any favor at God's hand, we must make use of his interest: when we have a cause to plead, he is the only person we must, and the most proper person we can, apply unto.

2. The high priest, when he did this, put on the Ephod, and none but he might do so. The Ephod may represent unto us the garment of the human nature, with which Christ, our great high priest, is clothed; which, though all the three persons had an hand in making, yet it was thought proper that the second person alone should wear it; which garment, as the Ephod was girt about the priest with a curious girdle, is girt about Christ with the girdle of love, and no other girdle but that could have fastened it to him. Because the children were partakers of flesh and blood (Heb. 2:14), the children whom he loved, and because he loved them, therefore he himself also took part of the same. And as the Ephod was a glorious garment, being adorned with sparkling gems and precious stones, so is the human nature of Christ, now in heaven full of glory; For we see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death,

crowned with glory and honour (Heb. 2:10); and in this nature as well as in the divine, does he act the part of a counsellor, advocate, and intercessor for us.

3. Counsel was asked by Urim and Thummim only for public persons; as for a king, or the house of Judgment; the senate or sanhedrin; or the whole congregation of Israel; and that only in matters of moment, as I have already observed. Now our great high priest, with Urim and Thummim, is acting

the part of a counsellor and intercessor, not for the men of the world, but for the whole congregation of the elect; I pray for them, says he; I pray not for the world (John 17:9). Those that he concerns himself for, are persons of note, they are princes, the sons of a King, nay, Kings themselves; such whom he has loved and washed from their sins in his own blood, and made them kings and priests to God and his Father (Rev. 1:5, 6). And the things that he is concerned about for them, are not trivial matters, but things of the greatest importance; such as the conversion of elect sinners, and the consolation of called saints, that they may have the Spirit as a comforter to abide with them; and the manifestations of pardoning grace to their souls; that their faith may not fail in an hour of temptation, but that they may persevere to the end, and be with him, where he is, to behold his glory.

4. The person for whom counsel was asked, was to stand before the priest: which shews us, that we must make our application to Christ, our high priest; we must ask in his name, and put our petitions into his hands, and stand before him waiting for an answer; for he has said, whatsoever ye ask in my name that will I do.

5. And lastly. As those responses which God returned by Urim and Thummim were certainly true, without any falsity or equivocation in them, such as the diabolical oracles of the Gentiles had; so as true are all those things which he says unto us by Christ: God did at sundry times, and in divers manners, speak in time past to the fathers by the prophets (Heb. 1:1); sometimes by dreams and visions, and sometimes by Urim and Thummim; but he hath now in these last days spoken unto us by his Son. And as all he said by dreams and visions, or by Urim and Thummim, was true so is all that he has said to us by his Son, who is truth itself, the faithful witness, who hath fully declared the whole counsel of God unto us.

Thus I have considered how the Urim and Thummim may be applied to Christ, or said to be with him, and lastly, Is the true Urim and Thummim alone with Christ? You learn hence, the superiority of Christ's priesthood to that of Aaron's; the Levitical law was but a shadow of good things to come, which good things are brought to us by Christ, who is the substance of those shadows. And we may also learn the glory of the gospel dispensation, in which the day is broke, and the shadows are fled and gone; and we all with open face beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord (2 Cor. 3:18).

4 The Meat Offering Typical Both Of Christ And Of His People.

LEVITICUS 2:1, 2

And when any will offer a meat offering unto the Lord, his offering shall be of fine flour: and he shall pour oil upon it, and put frankincense thereon; and he shall bring it to Aaron's sons, the priests; and He shall take thereout his handful of the flour thereof, and of the oil thereof, with all the frankincense thereof: and the priest shall burn the memorial of it upon the altar, to be an offering made by fire of a sweet savour unto the Lord.

Sacrifices of old were of divine institution; and they were appointed of God, long before the Levitical dispensation; when a variety of them were in a particular manner enjoined upon the people. They commenced almost as early as the fall of Adam: they immediately took place thereon. Adam's sons, Abel and Cain, offered sacrifices; one of the fruits of the earth, the other of the firstlings of his flock. And the one is said to offer up a more acceptable sacrifice than the other; because he offered it up by faith in a view to the great sacrifice of Christ, the antitype of all the sacrifices, whether before, or under the Levitical dispensation. Wherefore he is said, for this, among other reasons, to be the Lamb slain, from the foundation of the world. The patterns of things in the heavens were purified by legal sacrifices; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these: (Heb. 9:23) which better sacrifices can be no other than that of Christ. His sacrifice is expressed in the plural number; not that there has been a repetition of it: for it is but one sacrifice, and but once offered up,

and will never be reiterated; but to shew the excellency of it, it being usual with the Jews to use the plural number in speaking of things the most excellent. So Christ is called Wisdoms, Prov. 1:20. Besides, respect may be had to the many sacrifices under the law, which were types of it, and were answered and fulfilled by it; and to the many persons on whose account it was offered; and to the parts of it, the soul and body of Christ: and this is a better sacrifice than the legal ones. The legal sacrifices could not make those who came to them perfect, or remove from their consciences a sense of sin. The blood of bulls and of goats could not take away sin; but Christ, by his own offering of himself (which has put an end to all other sacrifices) has "put away sin for ever, and perfected for ever them that are sanctified." (Heb. 10:14)

Various kinds of sacrifices were offered before and under the Levitical dispensation. Some were peace-offerings, others sin-offerings, and others trespass-offerings; of which we have an account in some of the following chapters. These were all typical of Christ. The peace-offering was typical of him, who is our peace: and who has made peace by the blood of his cross. The sin and trespass-offerings were typical of him, "who knew no sin yet was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Cor. 5:21) He is the sum and substance of them all; and has completed them, by finishing transgression, making an end of sin, making reconciliation for iniquity, and bringing in an everlasting righteousness.

Among these sacrifices and offerings, that of the burnt-offering was a very considerable one. Of which we read at large in the preceding chapter, and are told what it consisted of; of the herd, and of the flocks, and of fowls. Those that were of the herd, were the ox; those that were of the flock, were the sheep or the goat; and of the fowls, turtles, or young pigeons: all fit emblems of our Lord Jesus Christ. The ox, or bullock, was an emblem of his strength and laboriousness; the sheep of his harmlessness and inoffensiveness; the turtle and young pigeons, of his meekness and humility, and of those dove-like graces which are to be found in him. These were to be perfect; to have no spot in them: typical of Christ, who is spotless and perfect, holy and without blemish, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. These offerings were to be voluntarily brought, intimating, that the sacrifice of Christ, the sum and

substance of them, would be freely offered up, as it was "He gave himself an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet smelling savour." (Eph. 5:2)

When these were brought, the offerer laid his hands upon them; which was expressive of a confession of sin, and was an acknowledgment that he deserved to die, as that creature was about to do, in his room and stead. Moreover, this action signified the transferring of his sins from himself to this sacrifice, which was to be offered up to make atonement for them; and it denoted the imputation of our sins to Christ, the great sacrifice. "God made to meet on him the iniquity of us all;" (Isa. 53:6) and who was as they were, a vicarious one, offered up in the room and stead of his people. The Just suffered for the unjust.

But I shall now call your attention to another very particular sort of offering, which is mentioned in the text, the meat-offering: which might with as much, if not greater propriety, be called the bread-offering; being made of fine flour. When any will offer a meat-offering to the Lord, it shall be of fine flour, and he shall pour oil upon it. (Lev. 2:1)

There were several kinds of these meat-offerings. There was one that always attended the daily sacrifices; the lamb that was offered in the morning and in the evening, as you may see in Exodus 29:38. "Now this is that which thou shalt offer upon the altar; two lambs of the first year, day by day, continually. The one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning, and the other lamb thou shalt offer at even; and with one lamb and a tenth deal of flour, mingled with the fourth part of an hin of beaten oil and the fourth part of an hin of wine for a drink-offering, and the other lamb thou shalt offer at even, and shalt do thereto according to the meat-offering of the morning, and according to the drink-offering thereof, for a sweet savour, an offering made by fire unto the Lord," This was to be done continually, every morning and evening. There was also a meat-offering, at the consecration of the priest, and which the high priest was obliged to offer every morning, at his own expense. (Lev. 4:20, &c.) There was another which accompanied the wave-offering, offered at the time of the harvest yearly. (Lev. 23:10, &c.) These meat-offerings were appointed and fixed at certain times, and were obliged to be offered; but this, mentioned in our text, was a free-will offering; wherefore it is said, when any will offer.

Now this was as the rest were, typical of the Lord Jesus Christ. As the daily sacrifice was typical of the Lamb of God, which takes away the sins of the world; continually takes away the sins of his people, whether of the night or of the day; so the meat-offering was typical of Christ, who is that meat which endureth unto everlasting life. Continually endures, and abides to be food for the faith of God's people, whose flesh is meat indeed: and whose blood is drink indeed: and that not merely typical and shadowy, but really solid and substantial; who is that bread of God which came down from heaven, and gives life unto the world. And, moreover, this meat, or bread-offering, may be considered as an emblem or representation of the children and people of God, as well as of Christ; for the same word is used of them, and particularly of the converted Gentiles; as you may see in the prophecy of Isaiah, where it is said, And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord, out of all nations, upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the Lord; as the children of Israel bring an offering in a c/can vessel into the house of the Lord. (Isa. 66:20) And this had its accomplishment in and under the ministration of the great apostle of the Gentiles; who was made so useful to the Gentile world, being instrumental in converting multitudes among them. In his epistle to the Romans he says, Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God, that I should be the minister of Jesus Christ unto the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost. (Rom. 4:15, 16) By the offering up of the Gentiles, he means the Gentile converts wrought upon by his ministry; who were either offered up and presented by him unto the Lord, as a chaste virgin to Christ; or who, under the influence of divine grace, presented themselves, bodies and souls, unto the Lord, as a holy, living, and acceptable sacrifice; which was but their reasonable service.

Now whether we consider this meat offering as having a regard unto Christ, or his people, or both, (for both may be included) we may observe the agreement between the one and the other in the following things.

I. The principal ingredient in this offering, which was indeed the substance of it, fine flour. When any will offer a meat-offering unto the Lord, his offering shall be of fine flour.

II. In the things which were used, or forbidden to be used with it. There were some things ordered to be used with it, such as oil, frankincense, and salt: and others that they were forbidden the use of, as leaven and honey; as may be seen in some following verses.

IN. In the composition thereof, and the different manner of dressing it. It was either to be fine flour mingled with oil, and to be baked in an oven, or in a pan, or fried in a frying pan, or if of the first-fruits, it was to be corn beaten out of the full ears and dried by the fire.

IV. In the use that was made of this offering part of it was burnt as a memorial unto the Lord, and the other part of it was eaten by the priests. And,

V. In the acceptableness of it to God. It was an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord.

I. I shall consider the principal ingredient of it. There were two things of which it consisted; one of which was fine flour. If any will offer a meat-offering unto the Lord, his offering shall be of fine flour. This may very well be thought to have respect to our Lord Jesus Christ. This fine flour was of wheat, as is clear from various accounts we have of this offering. So when Araunah the Jebusite gave his threshing floor to king David, to build an altar upon, and his threshing instruments for wood; he gave also, it is said (or proposed to give) wheat for a meat-offering. (1 Chron. 21:23) By which, as well as from other passages, it appears, that this meat-offering of fine flour, was of fine wheat, which is the choicest of all grain; and to which our Lord compares himself when he says, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die it brings forth much fruit, (John 12:24) signifying hereby, the necessity of his dying, in order that he might bring forth much fruit.

This may denote the excellency of Christ: the superior excellency of him to all others, not only as a divine person, but as God-man and Mediator: he is preferable to angels and to men. He has obtained a more excellent name than the angels, having a more excellent nature than they; being superior to them upon all accounts: for he is represented as the object of their religious worship and adoration. When he

bringeth his first begotten into the world, he saith, let all the angels of God worship him. (Heb. 1:6) And there is a very good reason why they should, since he is their Creator. He maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. (Heb. 1:7) And as God-man, and Mediator; having finished the great work of redemption and salvation, for his people, he is set down at the right hand of God, where angels are not; for, to which of the angels said he at any time, sit on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool. (Heb. 1:13) These are represented as ministering spirits sent forth by him to minister to them who are the heirs of salvation, whilst he sits at the right hand of God far above all principalities, angels, authorities, and powers, they being made subject to him.

He is the chiefest, or chosen out from among ten thousands of men. He is styled God's elect in a special and peculiar sense: behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth. (Isa. 42:1) He is chosen of God and precious. He is the head of election and grace. He was chosen as head to his members. He is fairer, more excellent, and valuable, than all the children of men. There is none like unto him, He is preferable to them in his offices. He is such a King as there is none like him. His Father has made him his first born, higher than the kings of the earth. He is the King of kings and Lord of lords, By him kings reign, and princes decree justice; and all are accountable to him for what they do.

As a prophet, there is none like him. Never man spake like him, such words of truth and consolation. He spake as one having authority, (having a commission from his divine Father) and not as the scribes and pharisees. (Matt. 7:29) He was anointed with the Holy Ghost above measure; for God gave not the Spirit by measure unto him.

As a priest there is none like him: no, not Aaron and all his sons, being a priest not after their order, but after the order of Melchizedec, who will remain for ever, and whose priesthood is an unchangeable one. There is a superlative excellency in him; on account of which, he is esteemed of God and good men. For, though disallowed of some, as he was by the Jews, yet he is chosen of God and precious: and he is precious to all that believe, by whom he is esteemed as more excellent than all others, whether angels or men. Of him they say, whom have I in heavens but thee, and

there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. (Ps. 73:25)

But this meat-offering, being of fine flour, of wheat the choicest of grain, may also denote the purity of Christ: flour of wheat, being the purest and cleanest of all others. As he is a divine person, he is a rock and his work is perfect: a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and true is he. The holy one of Israel, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises. He who hates iniquity, and loves righteousness.

As man, his human nature was entirely free from all contagion and corruption of sin: from original taint, as the fine flour of which this meat-offering was, free from all bran, so He was free from the bran of original corruption. Though all men are conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity, He was not. Though out of an unclean thing, a clean one cannot be brought, naturally; yet in such a wonderful way and manner was the human nature of Christ produced, as to be free from corruption; and therefore it is said, that the holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. (Luke 1:35) Pure and free was he from any iniquity in life: he did none, neither was guile found in his mouth. His enemies traduced him all they could; and sought for false witnesses to bear a testimony against him, to charge him with some sin, but they could find none. His judge acquitted him, saying, I find no fault in him. (John 19:6) Satan, his grand enemy, sought all he could to injure and ruin his character, yet he could find no sin in him; the Prince of this world cometh, (says Christ) and hath nothing in me. (John 14:30) All his administrations, in the several offices he undertook, were holy. His doctrines which he as a prophet delivered were pure. All the administrations of his kingly office were just and righteous. Righteousness was the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The execution of his priestly office was with the greatest purity and holiness; such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners. (Heb. 7:26) Particularly the sacrifice which he, as a priest offered up, (of which the meat-offering was a type) was a pure and holy one. He himself being without sin, was a fit and proper person to take away the sins of others by the sacrifice of himself. This he was capable of, and did offer up himself without spot to God being the Lamb of God, without the spot of original, or blemish

of actual sin and transgression.

Moreover, as fine flour of wheat is the principal part of human sustenance, and what strengthens the heart of man, and nourishes him, and is the means of maintaining and supporting life, it may fitly shadow and figure out our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the bread of God, which came down from heaven. Bread is put for all the provisions of life, as in that petition our Lord directs his disciples to use, Give us this day our daily bread. (Matt. 6:11) So Christ is our life, our joy, our peace, and comfort. He is our raiment, our clothing, our food, our meat, and drink; he is our all in all. It is by faith, feeding upon him, we receive spiritual strength. To those that have no might, he increaseth strength; and in the strength of this spiritual food, may believers be said to walk many days. Though they are so weak and feeble in themselves, that they can do nothing, yet, receiving spiritual strength from him, living by faith upon him, they can do all things. They are nourished up by him with the words of faith and sound doctrine: the words of grace, relating to his person, these are the wholesome words which are strengthening to true believers. By these, spiritual life is maintained and supported. He is the bread of life which came down from heaven, and gives life to the world; on which, if a man feeds by faith, he shall never die, but have eternal life. For, as the living Father hath sent me (says Christ) and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. (John 6:57)

The sacrifices of the old law, so this in particular is called the bread of God. "They shall be holy unto their God, and not profane the name of their God; for the offerings of the Lord made by fire, and the bread of their God they do offer." (Lev. 21:6) Again, "Thou shalt sanctify him therefore, for he offereth the bread of thy God." (Lev. 21:8) Now this is the very name which our Lord Jesus Christ bears: particularly alluding to this of the meat-offering, he is called the bread of God which came down from heaven. (John 6:33) The bread of God's preparing, the bread of God's giving, and the bread which God blesses for the nourishment of his people. Thus this meat-offering, as to the substance of it, being of fine flour of wheat, is a very special and particular representation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It may also, with great propriety be applied unto his people, who are represented in Scripture frequently as wheat. Hence you read in the New Testament, while

the wicked and ungodly are compared to chaff which shall he burnt up with unquenchable fire, they are spoken of as the wheat which Christ shall gather into his garner. (Matt. 3:12) When tares are said to be sown among the good seed, they are ordered to be suffered to grow till the time of the harvest, lest the wheat should be plucked up with them. And when the time of harvest comes, we are told, that the tares shall be gathered, and bound up in bundles and burned, and the wheat shall be gathered into barns: (Matt. 13:30) meaning true believers in our Lord Jesus Christ. These may be signified hereby, because of their peculiar choiceness; being the excellent in the earth, in whom is the delight of the Lord Jesus Christ, as well as of his divine Father, whom he has chosen from all others, to be his peculiar people. They are his Hephzibah in whom he delighteth, and his Beulah to whom he is married.

And they being compared to wheat, may denote also their purity. Not as considered in themselves; for they are no better than others by nature, being all under the power of sin, defiled with it, and liable to the consequences of it. And even when they are called by the grace of God, and have a principle of holiness wrought in them, sin dwells in them. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. (1 John 1:8) Much sin is committed by them. There is not a just man upon earth that doeth good, and sinneth not: (Eccl. 7:20) but their purity is in Christ. That he might purify unto himself a peculiar people, he has wrought out a righteousness for them, and has shed his precious blood to wash them from their sins; and so they are presented to his divine Father without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, I now proceed,

II. To consider the things which were to be made use of along with this meat-offering; and the things which were forbidden to be used in it,

There were some things to be made use of in it, such as oil, frankincense, and salt. Oil was to be poured upon it, frankincense put thereon; and every oblation was to be seasoned with salt. The oil that was poured upon the meat-offering, or to be mingled with it, may denote, either the grace of God in Christ, or the grace of God communicated to, and bestowed upon his people. It may denote the grace of the Spirit of God, poured out upon Christ without measure; that

oil of gladness with which he was anointed above His fellows, and from whence he has the name of Messiah, or Christ, or Anointed; and with which he was anointed to be Prophet, Priest, and King. In allusion to which, the church says, Thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee. (Song 1:3) Or this may denote the grace poured out upon his people, which is sometimes signified by oil hence the wise virgins are said to take oil in their vessels, They were concerned for the true grace of God; and that as a foundation of their making a profession of religion, which the foolish virgins shewed no concern for. This is the unction from the Holy One, that anointing which teacheth all things; that oil of joy for mourning, spoken of in Isa. 61:3.

Frankincense put upon the meat-offering, may denote either the acceptableness of the Lord Jesus Christ, to God and his people; or the acceptableness of his people unto God, and to Christ. It may denote the acceptableness of the Lord Jesus Christ as an offering and a sacrifice to God, and to divine Justice. He is expressly said to be an offering and a sacrifice to God, of a sweet smelling savour. (Eph. 5:2) And it may denote his acceptableness as a meat-offering to his people. Those who know the nature, sweetness, and profitableness of feeding by faith on this bread-offering, will say, as the disciples did, Lord, evermore give us this bread: (John 6:34) we would be always living, and feeding by faith on this bread-offering. It may denote also the acceptableness of the people of God, in and through Christ. They are accepted with God in him: they are like pillars of smoke, as the church is said to be, perfumed with frankincense. (Song 3:6) Their persons are acceptable to God, through Christ; so are their services and sacrifices. Their sacrifices of praise are acceptable to God; so are their prayers, as they ascend up before God, perfumed with the much incense of our Lord's mediation.

Salt was another thing that was used in it; which makes food savoury, and preserves from putrefaction, and may denote the savouriness of the Lord Jesus Christ to believers. Can that which is unsavoury be eaten without salt? says Job. (Job 6:6) Now Christ, as a meat-offering, is to his people savoury food, such as their souls love: pleasing, delightful, comfortable, refreshing, nourishing, and strengthening. Salt is an emblem of perpetuity. Hence you read of a covenant

of salt; (Num. 18:19) which signifies a perpetual covenant, an everlasting covenant; such as the covenant of grace is, ordered in all things and sure. And such the covenant of the priesthood was, which was to endure until the Messiah came. Now this may denote the perpetuity of Christ's sacrifice, which always remains; and the perpetuity of him, as the meat-offering, For he is that meat which endures to everlasting life; and him has God the Father sealed.

And this, as it respects the people of God, may be an emblem of the savour of their life and conversation. Ye are the salt of the earth, says our Lord; (Matt. 5:13) and again, he says, have salt in yourselves. (Mark 9:50) And it is expected that those who profess Christ, should have their speech always with grace, seasoned with salt; (Col. 4:6) and that no corrupt communication proceed out of their mouths.

There were two things which the Jews were forbidden to use in the meat-offering; the one was leaven, and the other was honey. There was to be no leaven in it. This, as it may respect our Lord Jesus Christ, the Antitype of the meat-offering, may denote his freedom from hypocrisy, and all false doctrines; which were the leaven of the scribes and pharisees. He said to his disciples, Beware of the leaven of the pharisees: and it immediately follows, which is hypocrisy. But Christ was an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile; no guile in his lips, in his life and conversation: he knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. Whatever the pharisees might mean when they sent out their disciples, with the Herodians, saying, Masters we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth; (Matt. 22:16) it was no doubt matter of fact. Leaven signifies false doctrine. Hence, when our Lord at another time cautions his disciples to beware of the leaven of the pharisees, he says, "How is it that you do not understand, that I spake it not unto you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the pharisees and the sadducees? Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread; but of the doctrine of the pharisees and sadducees," (Matt. 16:11, 12) Their doctrines were corrupt and false. But our Lord's doctrine was quite free and clear from every thing of this kind. He is truth itself, the way, the truth, and the life: and the doctrines preached by him were grace and truth.

To apply this to the people of God, as no meat-

offering was to be made with leaven, it may denote, that they should take heed of communing with profane and scandalous persons. Purge out, therefore, says the apostle, the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened: (1 Cor. 5:7) meaning, they should put away the scandalous person from among them. Such persons who are of scandalous lives and conversations, are to be put away: there is to be no fellowship held with the unfruitful works of darkness. "For what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" And it may denote, that they should be clear of malice and wickedness: they ought to lay aside, as new-born babes, all superfluity and naughtiness. (James 1:21)

Another thing forbidden in the meat-offering is honey. Nor any honey in any offering of the Lord made by fire, ver. 12. It may, at first sight, seem strange that this should be forbidden, since it was to be brought amongst the first-fruits: and when it was so often taken in a good sense in Scripture. The doctrines of the gospel are compared thereunto: the word of the Lord is said to be sweeter than honey, and the honey comb. (Ps. 19:10) Honey and milk are said to be under the church's tongue; that is, the doctrines of the everlasting gospel, comparable to honey and milk, because they are sweet and nourishing. And Christ is said himself to eat his honey comb with his honey; (Song 1:5) and yet honey is prohibited in this meat-offering. The reason of this is, because it was made use of among the Heathens in their offerings, and the people of God were not to walk in their ordinances: but in the ordinances appointed of the Lord. Besides, honey, like leaven, is of a fermenting nature, and which, when burned, gives an ill smell: and no ill smell was to be in the offering. It was to be, as our text says, of a sweet savour unto the Lord; which it could not have been if the honey had been in it. Besides, it is of a cloying nature, it causes a loathing, when persons eat too freely of it. (Prov. 27:7) Now there is nothing of this to be found in the antitypical meat-offering, our Lord Jesus Christ. No, the true believer that feeds by faith upon him, the language of his soul is, Lord, evermore give us this bread; let me always feed upon this provision. Moreover, honey may be considered as an emblem of sin, and sinful pleasures; which are as a sweet morsel rolled under the tongue of a wicked man, though it proves the poison of asps within him at

last: and so denotes unto us, that such who would feed by faith on Christ, ought to relinquish sinful lusts and pleasures. As well it may also further denote, that the people of God must not expect their sweets, without their bitters. They that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution of one kind or another. So the passover was to be eaten with bitter herbs, as the representation of the same thing.—For these reasons honey was not to be used.

III. As to the composition thereof, and the different manner of dressing this meat-offering. It was to be made of fine flour, made of wheat, beaten out of the husk, and ground: it was to be mingled with oil, kneaded, baked in an oven, fried in pans, or parched by the fire. Now all this may be an emblem of the dolorous sorrows and sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ; who was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; who bore the fire of divine wrath, who was the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and who is the proper food of our faith.

And as it may be applied to the people of God, it may denote, not only their separation from others, but the trials and exercises they meet with, which are sometimes called fiery trials. But I must hasten to consider,

IV. The use that was made of this offering.

Part of it was burnt as a memorial unto the Lord, either to put the Lord in mind of his loving kindness to his people, and of his covenant with them, and promises unto them, to which the allusion is, Psalm 20:3, or to put the offerer in mind of the great sacrifice of Christ, who was to be offered for his sins, and to be a meat offering to him. And the other part of it was to be eaten by the priests; which shews the care taken by the Lord for the maintenance of the priests, and from whence the apostle argues for the support of the ministers of the gospel, 1 Cor. 9:13, 14. And this may denote, that such who are made priests unto God, by Christ, have a right to feed upon Christ, the meat-offering by faith; who is the altar and meat-offering, which none but such have a right to eat of. I shall but just mention,

V. The acceptableness of it. It is said to be of a sweet savour unto the Lord, as Christ's sacrifice is said to be, Ephes. 5:2. And so his people also, their persons are an offering of a sweet smelling savour to God, in Christ; being accepted in him the Beloved, and as are their

sacrifices both of prayer and praise.—But to draw to a conclusion.

Let us look to Christ as the meat-offering. We are called upon to bring an offering, and enter into the courts of God, Psalm 94:8. What offering can we bring in the arms of our faith but this? And let us hope, that all our sacrifices will be accepted through him, who is that altar that sanctifies every gift.

Is Christ the Antitype of the meat-offering, food for our faith? Let us regard him as such, and feed upon him and the rather, in as much as we are so kindly invited by him. come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled. (Pro. 9:5) And as in every offering under the legal dispensation, a regard is had to Christ, who was the substance of those types; so in every gospel ordinance we are to look to Jesus. He is to be seen and regarded in them all; particularly in that of Baptism, and that of the Lord's Supper. And it may be easily observed, that there is a similarity between the meat-offering and the Lord's Supper. The meat-offering was made of fine flour. Bread is one part of this ordinance, With the meat-offering went a drink-offering of wine; so in this. And as we are this evening about to attend to this ordinance, may our faith feed on Christ, the sum and substance thereof. It is his flesh that is meat indeed; and his blood that is drink indeed. May we be helped to feed upon it by faith, looking to Jesus: to eat of his flesh, and drink of his blood, in a spiritual sense. So shall we be greatly refreshed in our souls and go on our ways rejoicing; rejoicing in Christ Jesus, and having no confidence in the flesh.

5 The Table And Shew-Bread, Typical Of Christ And His Church. Leviticus

24:8 and 9.

Every sabbath, he shall set it in order before the Lord, continually; being taken from the children of Israel, by an everlasting covenant. And it shall be Aaron's and his sons'; and they shall eat it in the holy place for it is most holy unto him of the offerings of the Lord made by fire, for a perpetual statute.

EVERY sabbath he shall set it. This refers to the shew-bread, which was to be always, continually before the Lord, according to Exodus 25:30. And thou shalt set upon the table shew-bread before me always. This was made of fine flour, as in the context, verse 5.

And this fine flour was made offering typical; both of Christ, and of his people with him; and these cakes were in number twelve. And thou shalt take fine flour, and bake twelve cakes thereof; two tenth deals shall be in one cake. (Lev. 24:5) These twelve cakes answer to the twelve tribes of Israel. And being set upon the table continually was in commemoration of the bread the twelve tribes of Israel were fed with in the wilderness. These were set upon a table called, in verse the 6th, a pure table: called so, because it was overlaid with pure gold; because upon it was set the pure shew-bread; bread made of fine flour, and used in the pure service of God. Of the form, matter, and decorations of this table, you read at large in the 25th chapter of the book of Exodus.

This table was set in the holy place, on the North side of it, over against the veil that divided between that and the holy of holies; and so was before the ark, the symbol of the Divine presence. And these twelve cakes were set in two rows, six in a row; and frankincense was put upon these rows, denoting the acceptableness of them to the Lord. And thou shalt put pure frankincense upon each row; that it may be on the bread for a memorial, even an offering made by fire unto the Lord. (Lev. 24:7) This was done, as our text says, every sabbath, Every sabbath he shall set it in order before the Lord. These cakes were first placed there on the sabbath day; and there they continued the whole week following. The next sabbath day they were removed from off the table, and twelve more new ones put in their room. As fast as the priests took off the old loaves, there was another course of priests that placed upon it new hot loaves; so that the table was never empty; therefore it is said, they were before the Lord continually. Hence this bread is called continual bread: (Num. 4:7) and this shew-bread was the portion of the priests. The twelve cakes of the old bread, when taken off the shew-bread table, were divided between the courses of the priests, that carried in, and brought out; and they were not to be carried to their own houses, or families; only Aaron and his sons were to eat of it, and that only in the holy place, the court of the tabernacle: for it is most holy unto him of the offerings of the Lord, made by fire, by a perpetual statute. (Lev. 24:9) Hence our

Lord observes, in answer to the rebuke the Jews gave his disciples for plucking the ears of corn on the sabbath-day, "Have ye not read what David did, when

how he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shew-bread; which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests?" (Matt. 7:3, 4)

Now the mystery, and the gospel of all this, I shall endeavour to point out; or to shew, what was meant and typified by

I. The Table, and

II. The bread set upon the Table.

I. The mystery or the gospel of the Table, upon which this bread was set every sabbath, and there continued all the week, until a fresh set of loaves were placed in their room. This table was a type of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of communion with him, in the administration of the word and ordinances. It was typical of the person of Christ, in both his natures: for there are two natures in him, human and divine. This is the great mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh. (1 Tim. 3:16) He is Immanuel, God with Us: God in our nature. he is the Word that was made flesh, and dwelt among us. (1 John 1:14) Yet, though two natures are in him, he is but one person; one Son of God: One Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him; (1 Cor. 8:6) one Mediator between God and man, the God-man Christ Jesus.

The human nature of Christ, may be signified by the wood, of which this table was made; and his divine nature, by the gold it was overlaid with: for this shew-bread table was made of shittim-wood, and that overlaid with fine gold. The wood may denote the human nature of Christ; that wood being excellent and incorruptible. Excellent. It has its rank among the most excellent trees in those parts; with the cedar, the myrtle, the fir, and the pine trees. (Isa. 41:19) Christ is excellent as the cedars; (Song 5:15) and more excellent than they. He is the chiefest among ten thousands, the choicest of them; chosen out from among the people. As to his human nature, he was separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens, superior to angels and men. Higher than they, than any creature whatsoever, even as to his human nature; being set at the right hand of God, angels, and authorities, and powers, being made subject unto him. (1 Pet. 3:22)

This wood is said to be incorruptible; and a fit emblem therefore of the human nature of Christ. In which, as there was no moral corruption, for he knew no sin, neither was guile found in him, in his

nature, lips, or life; so there was no physical, or natural corruption in him, not in his body. No, not when dead. For though he was brought to the dust of death, and laid in the grave, yet he laid not there so long as to see corruption. He was raised from thence before any thing of that kind could appear in him. And now, though he was dead, he is alive, and lives for evermore, and has the keys of hell and of death.

His divine nature may be signified by the gold, with which this table was overlaid. For that may not only denote (as some have thought) the excellency of his human nature, as being ornamented with the gifts and graces of the Spirit; but rather his divine nature, which is elsewhere called his head; and which is said to be, as the most fine gold. He, being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with him; being possessed of all divine perfections. The whole fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily in him; and therefore, he is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person.

And this shew-bread table was not only typical of Christ, as to the matter of it; being made of such excellent, incorruptible wood, and that overlaid with pure gold; but also with respect to the decorations of it. It had a crown of gold round about, and it had a border of gold also about it, as we read in Exod. 25:23 and the following verses. It had a crown of gold upon it; which may be expressive of that honour and glory which is due to Christ, and is given unto him as the King of kings, and Lord of lords. It is said, prophetically, of him, Thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head. (Ps. 21:3) That is, God his Father, has set a crown of pure gold upon his head: which is not to be understood in a literal sense, but figuratively, of that honour and glory conferred upon him as Mediator; being now crowned with glory and honour, and having a name given unto him, above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow. And not only has us Divine Father bestowed upon him this honour and glory, as Mediator, that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father, but the church and people of God (sometimes in a figurative sense called his mother) set a crown upon his head, cast their crowns at his feet, and give him all the honour and glory of their redemption and salvation. Hence it is said, Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon, with the crown wherewith his mother

crowned him, in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart: (Song 3:11) which refers to what I am now speaking of.

The border of gold, with the crown upon it, about this table of shew-bread, is also significant of what may be observed in Christ. For as this phrase, when applied to the church of Christ, as it is in the same mystical song I have referred to, where it is said, We will make thee borders of gold, with studs of silver, may denote the graces of the Spirit of God, bestowed upon his people, which is as ornamental to them, as borders of gold and studs of silver; so this, being applied to Christ; may denote that fulness of grace that there is in him. He is full of grace and truth. He hath received the Spirit, and the gifts and graces thereof, without measure. Grace is poured into his lips: and he is anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows. And now, upon all accounts, view him in what light you will, whether in his divine nature, as a divine person, God over all, blessed for ever; or in his mediatorial capacity, as head of the church, and whose head is as fine gold; and, in the fulness of the graces of the Spirit of God, he is possessed of, he will appear exceeding excellent and precious, the chiefest among ten thousand. To them that believe he is precious, and altogether lovely, there is none in heaven or on earth like unto him, or to be desired with him. Thus this table was typical of the person of Christ.

It may also be considered, as typical of communion with him. A table among men is an emblem of communion and fellowship. Here men sit, eat, drink, and converse together and this shew-bread table is an emblem of the saints' communion with Christ, in the present state more especially. There is the table of the Lord; to which his people are now admitted; where he sits down with them, and they with him, to have fellowship with him in the ministration of the word and ordinances, of which he is the sum and substance. He, the King of Saints, sits at his table; and whilst he is sitting there his church's spikenard (or the graces of his Spirit in his people) sends forth the sweet smell thereof. This table Christ himself is the provider of; it is he that hath furnished it. Wisdom hath furnished her table: that is, Christ hath done it; and here he sits and encourages his guests to eat of the provisions he has made, saying, "Eat, O friends, drink; yea, drink abundantly, O my beloved."

He comes in to them, sits down with them, and eats with them, and they with him; and herein is fellowship; such fellowship, as gives the greatest joy, pleasure and satisfaction to the believer, that he can possibly have in this world. On which he may, and does exultingly say, Truly, our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. What more honourable than this, to sit with Christ, the King of kings, at his table? Haman made his boast; it gave him a sensual carnal pleasure, elated his mind, and filled him with pride and vanity, that he was invited by Queen Esther to a banquet, where only he and the king were to be. It was an act of kindness in David, and an honour done to Mephibosheth, that he was to eat at his table all the days of his life. O! what an honour is it to the people of God, these poor Mephibosheths, to be admitted to sit with Christ at his table! This is an instance of amazing condescension in Christ, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, whose throne is the heavens, and the earth is his footstool: that he should look upon those that are of an humble and contrite spirit; dwell with them, and admit them to enjoy the most intimate communion and fellowship with him. Nothing in the world more desirable than this, to a truly gracious soul. No wonder the church should express her fervent desire, in such language as this, that she sought him with her whole heart; and that the desire of her soul was to his name, and to the remembrance of him. (Isa. 26:8) No wonder that saints, who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and know what communion with the blessed Redeemer means, should pant after him, as the hart pants after the water brooks: that this should be the one thing uppermost in their souls, to see the beauty of the Lord, while they are enquiring in his temple. Nothing is so delightful as this, to sit under the shadow of the blessed Redeemer, where his fruit drops on every side; they take it up by faith, feed upon it, and it is sweet unto their taste. This is what makes the tabernacles of the Lord amiable to them; and a day in his courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. Yea, it is this that makes every child of God say, I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

Now it is to this communion that the Lord's people are called by grace, in effectual vocation. They are called by him to come from Lebanon, from all their carnal and sinful pleasures and companions, to go

along with him. They are exhorted to forsake their own people, and their father's house, and all the sensual enjoyments thereof; to be with Christ, their Lord, their Head, and King; and to partake of spiritual enjoyments, which are abundantly preferable to any thing they leave behind. Ye were called (says the apostle) unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. (1 Cor. 1:5) And a greater privilege cannot be enjoyed on this side heaven. And this greatly lies in feeding upon Christ by faith; in eating of his flesh, and drinking of his blood; which is the provision set before us in his word and ordinances. Thus this table may be an emblem of that communion and fellowship which the saints have with Christ in the present state.

It is true, indeed, that the same figure of a table is sometimes made use of to represent that communion and fellowship which the saints will have with Christ in heaven. Hence he says, I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table, in my kingdom. (Luke 22:29, 30) Here you see the figure is used to express that fellowship and communion that the saints will have with Christ in another world; when in any shall come from the East, and from the West, from the North, and from the South, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as at a table, regaling themselves with the fruits set before them in the kingdom of heaven: where, the Lamb in the midst of the throne shall feed them with the rich discoveries of himself and his love, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water, by which they shall be sweetly and fully refreshed, and that for ever; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

But the shew-bread table being placed not in the holy of holies, the figure of the heavenly state; but in the holy place, the figure of the church here on earth; it may rather point out that communion and fellowship the saints are admitted to in the present state; and the enjoyments they have in the ministration of the word and administration of the ordinances. These are sometimes in Scripture signified by a feast. The ministration of the everlasting gospel, our Lord represents in this light; he says, a certain king made a marriage-feast for his son, and sent his servants to invite persons thereunto, saying, all things are ready: (Matt. 22:4) which has regard, I conceive, to the gospel dispensation, the ministration of the

word, and the invitation of souls to attend thereto; inasmuch as the gospel proclaims, that all is done, and all is ready, my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready; come to the marriage. Christ is offered up, peace and reconciliation made, pardon obtained, and righteousness wrought out; so that it may well be said, come, for all things are ready. The ordinances of the gospel are signified also by a feast, particularly that of the supper; which may with great propriety be called a feast of fat things, of wine on the lees well refined. And this is represented by a table; it is called the Lord's table. Ye cannot be (says the apostle) partakers of the Lord's table, and the table of devils; (1 Cor. 10:21) that is, there is the greatest inconsistency in the world, that ye should partake of the Lord's table, and at the same time be partakers with the worshippers of idols, or join in fellowship with them in any of their idolatrous practices.

Now Christ is the sum and substance of the word and ordinances. We preach not ourselves (saith the apostle), but Christ Jesus the Lord. (2 Cor. 4:5) From which it appears, Christ, in his person, offices, and grace, is the sum and substance of a gospel ministry: so he is likewise of gospel ordinances. In the ordinance of Baptism, his sufferings, his burial, and his resurrection from the dead, are in a lively manner represented. (Rom. 6:4) And, in the ordinance of the supper, Christ is evidently set forth before us, as crucified and slain. Now in these, the ministration of the word, and administration of gospel ordinances, Christ is pleased to afford his gracious presence, and grant his people fellowship with himself. Where two or three are gathered together in his name, he has promised to be in the midst of them, to bless them. And where his ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper are administered, he has promised to be with his people to the end of the world. It is through these windows of gospel ordinances, that Christ grants his people looks of love. It is through these lattices that Christ shews himself in the glory of his person, and in the riches of his grace. When his church enquires where he causes his flocks to rest at noon? His answer is, Go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherd's tents; (Song 1:8) that is, go where my pastures, my shepherds are; where my ministers are employed in feeding my flock; in ministering my word, and administering my

ordinances. It is here Christ grants his presence, and holds fellowship with his people. And thus this table may be an emblem of Christ, and of communion with him in the word and ordinances.

Before I dismiss this head, give me leave to observe unto you, that there were rings upon the shew-bread table, and staves to be put in these rings, which were for the removing and carrying it from place to place, and which was done by the Levites, when it was necessary; as while they were in the wilderness, and before the tabernacle had a fixed place for it. For wherever the tabernacle was carried, the ark and the table were also. Now let it be observed, that where a church of Christ is, there Christ himself is, there his Spirit is, and there are the word and ordinances; which are to remain until his second coming. For they are not like the ordinances of the former dispensation, which were shaken and removed; these remain, and continue, and will do so. Hence that promise, Isaiah 59:21, "My Spirit, that is upon thee; and my words, which I have put in thy mouth (speaking of the church, and with regard to her spiritual seed) shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever." But sometimes a church state is removed: the candlestick is removed out of its place. When this is done, the word and ordinances are taken away, and indeed it is by the taking away of these, that a church state is removed. The kingdom of God is taken from one people, and carried to another; as from the land of Judea into the Gentile world; and from the eastern part of the world to the more northern. As for the seven Asiatic churches, where are they now? The word, the ordinances, and gospel are all gone from them; and of this the removal of the shew-bread table was a figure. As that was done by the priests and Levites; so this, by the ministers of the gospel, who bear the name (that is, the gospel) of Christ, and carry it from place to place, as he in his providence directs them.—But I proceed in the

II. Place, to give you some account of the gospel, and the mystery of the shew-bread set upon his table.

This may be considered as typical of the church of God, who are called bread: We being many, are one bread, and one body. (1 Cor. 10:17) They are all one bread; and they may be fitly signified by the shew-bread: by these twelve cakes of unleavened bread, set

continually upon the table every sabbath day. As they were made of fine flour, and into unleavened cakes, so they may denote those that are upright in heart and conversation. Israelites indeed, who have the truth of grace in them; who are such as keep the feast, not with the leaven of malice and wickedness: but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. These twelve cakes, had reference to the twelve tribes of Israel: so these may signify the whole of the spiritual Israel of God, whether consisting of Jews or Gentiles; even that General Assembly and Church of the First-Born, whose names are written in heaven. In the original text it is the bread of faces; because this bread was always before the face or faces of God, before all the Three Divine Persons in the Trinity; before God the Father, Son, and Spirit: before Jehovah, before the divine Shechinah, which dwelt between the Cherubims, over the mercy-seat of the ark, a symbol of the divine presence. It was continually before the Lord, as our text expresses it: and this may denote, the people of God's constant and continual presentation of themselves before the Lord in acts of public and religious worship. This was the practice of the saints before the law was given: as in the times of Job there were seasons when the sons of God, true professors of religion, met and presented themselves before the Lord. (Job 1:6) Under the legal dispensation it was enjoined that all the males of Israel, three times in the year, should appear before the Lord: namely, at the feast of the passover, at the feast of pentecost, and at the feast of tabernacles. And under the gospel dispensation, we that profess the name of Christ, are under the greatest obligation so to do: therefore the apostle beseeches the Romans, to whom he wrote, by the mercies, by the blessings of the everlasting covenant, by those all-spiritual blessings with which they are blessed in Christ Jesus: if they had any regard to them, any sense of them upon their souls; if these could have any weight with them, he begs that they would present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God; which was but their reasonable service.

But it may still have a higher sense than this; it may have respect unto these persons, being always under the eye and care of God. Not only are the eyes of his providence upon them, which run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of those whose hearts are upright towards

him, to see that no hurt comes to them, that they stand in need of nothing, and to protect, preserve, and defend them; but his eyes of love, grace and mercy, are always upon them,

He never withdraws his eyes from them. They are set continually upon the righteous: they are engraven upon the palms of his bands; and their walls are continually before him. He watches over them night and day, lest any hurt them.

Again, This shew-bread, and the twelve loaves thereof, were placed upon the table, where they stood firm and safe. This may denote, the standing and security of the saints and people of God, upon our Lord Jesus Christ, that sure foundation God has laid in Sion: that foundation of the apostles and prophets. Here they have a sure and safe standing, as on a rock, the Rock of ages against which the powers of hell and earth can never prevail. And as about this shew-bread table (as before observed) there was a border of gold, to keep every thing put upon it from falling off, this may still further point out unto us, the safety of the people of God; who are set upon the shew-bread table, our Lord Jesus Christ. There is no danger of their falling off from thence: here is a border of gold all round them: the power of Christ around them, to keep them from falling. Yea, God himself is round about them, as the mountains are round about Jerusalem. They are in the hands of Christ, who is able to keep them from falling; and out of whose hands none can pluck them. They are safe, then, being placed upon this shew-bread table.

And then you may further observe, this shew-bread was placed upon the table every sabbath-day: there was a constant succession; the table was never empty. There were two sets of priests always employed; one took off the old loaves, the other put on the new ones, as fast as the old ones were taken off. This may denote the constancy of true believers that have the interest of Christ at heart, in assembling continually before the Lord. Not forsaking the assembling of themselves together; but, like the primitive Christians continuing steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine, and in fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. Or rather, it may denote, the constant succession of the children and people of God in the world. As in the natural world, and the inhabitants thereof, there is a constant succession; one generation goes, and another

comes, as the wise man says; so it is in the spiritual world, and the churches of Christ. Here is one set of believers going out of the world, and another coming in their room; so that Christ has always a seed; and that promise is made good: His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me. (Ps. 89:36) But to proceed,

This shew-bread, set upon the table, may also be emblematical of Christ himself; and that as he is the spiritual food of his people, He is the true bread; so he says, My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. (John 6:32) He is speaking there of the manna in the wilderness; which was not the true, but only typical bread. Christ is the true bread, in distinction from that. So the meat-offering, which, on a similar occasion, I gave you some account of, was only typical bread. Christ is the true bread; the truth of those types. His flesh is meat indeed; these were only the shadows. This shew-bread, made of fine flour, may fitly signify Christ the finest of wheat, the corn of heaven, the bread that comes from thence; by which his people are fed while in the wilderness. And there being twelve of these loaves upon the table, may denote the fulness and sufficiency of Christ. Here is bread enough, and to spare. Here is enough for the people of God in all ages. This bread is exceeding strengthening; those that have once tasted of it, say, Lord, evermore give us this bread. And as this bread was continual bread, was always upon the table; so it may denote, the permanency of Christ. He is always the same: the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. And as this was set upon the table by the priests, and only by them; and none eat of this bread but the priests only, Aaron and his sons, (who may be significant of the ministers of the word, or of Christians in common under the gospel dispensation;) if we understand it of the ministers of the word, it points out, that they set before the people the shew-bread; even the wholesome and salutary words of our Lord Jesus Christ; and feed the people with knowledge and understanding. But if we understand it, (as I rather do) as expressive of the people of God in common, who under the gospel dispensation are all made kings and priests to God, it denotes, that these, and these only, eat of this spiritual food. None but they do it; none but they can do it.

Or, this shew-bread, set upon the table may be an emblem of the intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ:

who is the Angel of God's presence, or face, (as it may be rendered), who continually appears in the presence of God for his people; and so may he fitly signified by the twelve cakes, representing the twelve tribes of Israel; or the whole election of grace, the spiritual Israel of God. As the high priest bore, upon his breast-plate, the names of all the people of Israel; so our High Priest bears, upon his breast-plate, or represents all the spiritual Israel of God, in the heaven of heavens; where he ever lives to make intercession for them. He is there as their representative; and they are set down in heavenly places in him. And these loaves being always upon the table, may denote, the continual intercession of Christ: he ever lives to make intercession for us. And these being set in rows upon the table, and frankincense put on each row, may denote, the, acceptableness of his intercession; for he was, and is always acceptable to his Father. His sacrifice is of a sweet smelling savour to him, upon which is founded his intercession. And the prayers of the saints, which he presents to his divine Father, are acceptable through him; as perfumed with his much incense, and therefore called odours. (Rev. 5:8)—Thus we have seen the mystery of these shadows, the shew-bread table, and the loaves set thereon; as they may be expressive of Christ and of his Church.

I close with a word or two, Let it be our great concern to enjoy communion with Christ. Seek that in every ordinance and opportunity, in hearing the word, and in attending upon ordinances. Let this be the main, the principal thing you do. Do not content yourselves with a bare hearing the word, and attendance upon ordinances, without communion with your Lord. Let that be the great concern of your souls; and if you are blessed with that, you are blessed with the highest favour that can be enjoyed on earth. For, as has been observed, what more honourable than to sit at his table who is the King of kings? What more desirable, what more delightful than this? And it is worth your while to attend time after time, one sabbath after another, one ordinance after another; that you may enjoy this blessing, fellowship with your Lord. Then in the next place, we see the antitype of the shew-bread is food for faith. Feed upon him as he is set before you in the word and ordinances: don't content yourselves with the bare external attendance thereon; but let it be your concern by faith to feed upon Christ, to lay hold on

him, embrace him, and that for yourselves, as he is here represented. And bless his holy name for his word, and for his ordinances. Bless his name that you have a place and a name in his house, better than that of sons and daughters. And let not your place be empty at the Lord's table: remember the case of Thomas, who was absent when Christ met his disciples. I say, remember his case, and what he lost; and into what a sad frame of soul he was cast, by reason thereof; out of which nothing could have recovered him, but the powerful and efficacious grace of God.

6 The Wave-Sheaf Typical Of Christ.

LEVITICUS 23:10, 11

Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, when ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof; then ye shall bring a sheaf of the first-fruits of your harvest unto the priest: and he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you: on the morrow, after the sabbath, and the priest shall wave it.

IN this chapter we have an account of the several festivals to be offered by the Jews in their generations until the coming of the Messiah. And these are called the Feasts of the Lord, verse 2. Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, concerning the feasts of the Lord, which ye shalt proclaim to be holy convocations; even these are my feasts. Which were of his appointment, by his direction, and for his honour and glory; and which were typical of Christ, and his person, offices, and grace.

The first of these mentioned in verse 3, is the seventh day sabbath. Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation, ye shall do no work therein: it is the sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings. Of this, Christ is the sum and substance. Wherefore, says the apostle, let no man judge you in this and the other thing; and among the rest, in respect of the sabbath-days, which are a shadow of good things to come; but the body is of Christ. (Col. 2:16, 17)

The sabbath was a rest (as the name signifies) from toil and labour: and this was typical of rest by Christ, whose rest was glorious; and that in every sense of it, both spiritual and eternal. There is a spiritual rest by Christ; which lies in a freedom from the burden of sin, and from the bondage of the law; and which lies

in peace, joy, and comfort, arising from a comfortable perception of an interest in the righteousness, blood, and sacrifice of the Son of God. This is that rest which our Lord promises to all such who come, spiritually, and by faith unto him. (Matt. 11:28) And besides this, there is that eternal rest, which remains for the people of God, in the other world. There will be a rest of their bodies in the grave, till the resurrection: a rest of their souls in the arms of Jesus, till that time: and then a rest of both with God and Christ, angels and glorified saints, to all eternity. Now of all these, this first feast was a figure.

The next that follows, is that of the passover, verses 5, 6. In the fourteenth day of the first month, at even, is the Lord's passover: and on the fifteenth day of the same month, is the feast of unleavened bread unto the Lord. This also was typical of Christ. Hence the apostle saith, Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us. (1 Cor. 5:7) And not only we Christians are now able, with great clearness and exactness, to observe the agreement between the passover and our Lord Jesus Christ; but even Moses, at the first institution of this ordinance, kept it by faith. So the author of the epistle to the

Hebrews asserts, that through faith he kept the passover: (Heb. 11:8) believing that the blood of the passover Lamb, sprinkled upon the door posts of the Israelites, would be a means of their preservation: believing there would be a speedy deliverance of the people of Israel from Egypt: and he kept it in faith of the future spiritual deliverance and redemption by Christ, the antitype of it.

The next of the feasts mentioned, is that which is in our text; the sheaf of the first-fruits. Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, when ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the first-fruits of your harvest unto the priest: and he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath, the priest shall wave it. This also was typical of Christ. We cannot have any doubt about it, as the apostle expressly says, Christ is risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept: and he further adds, every man in his own order: that is, shall rise in his own order; Christ the first-fruits, and afterwards they that are Christ's, at his coming. (1 Cor. 15:32) What I shall endeavour to

do at this time is, to shew you the agreement between the type and the antitype.

I. In the matter of it: both in respect to its quality and quantity. A sheaf of the first-fruits.

II. With respect to what is done to it, and with it. It was reaped, it was brought to the court, and beaten out. It was dried and parched by the fire, ground in a mill; and an omer of it was taken and waved by the priest, before the Lord.

III. With respect to the concomitants of it: or, what attended it: and that is, a Lamb was offered for a burnt-offering; and likewise a meat-offering and a drink-offering were to accompany it.

I. We shall endeavour to shew, that this sheaf of the first-fruits was a type of Christ, as to the matter of it, both respect to quality and quantity. With respect to quality, it was a sheaf of barley; as to its quantity, it was a single sheaf; or, however, such a quantity as only one omer of barley was taken from it, and waved before the Lord by the priest.

It was of barley. The Jews had a two-fold harvest, one of barley, the other of wheat. That of barley, which was at this time, was the first; which was at the time of the feast of the passover. We read that Ruth and Naomi came out of the land of Moab to Bethlehem, in the beginning of barley harvest. (Ruth 1:22) From that unto the wheat harvest were fifty days, or about seven weeks; which is what in the New Testament is called Pentecost. It was the feast of Weeks, of wheat harvest, and of in-gathering of the fruits of the earth. (Exod. 34:22) Now it was at the former, and not at the latter of these, that this sheaf of the first-fruits was taken. Therefore it must be of barley, and not of wheat; as the time most clearly shews: it being at the time of the passover, or of the Israelites coming out of the land of Egypt. A little before that, when the plague of hail was upon Pharaoh and the Egyptians, we are told, that barley was in the ear. (Exod. 9:31) Now at this time it was ripe; but it must not be reaped, till a sheaf of the first-fruits was waved before the Lord.

Now this being of barley, which is a mean sort of grain, may denote, the mean estate of our Lord Jesus Christ in his humiliation. The barley cake which tumbled into the host of Midian, and overturned the tent in it, as in the dream of the Midianitish soldier, was an emblem of Gideon, a mean and unpromising instrument of the destruction of the Midianitish

army. So here the sheaf of barley may be an emblem of our Lord Jesus Christ, in his state of humiliation; who, when he was found in fashion as a man, appeared in the form of a servant, He grew up as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground; there being no form nor comeliness in him, no outward form and splendour which might make him desirable to carnal men. He was reckoned a worm, and no man: such was his great humility, wonderful condescension, and amazing grace. It is well known, it is notorious: Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor; that ye, through his poverty might be rich. (2 Cor. 8:9)

But this sort of grain, though mean, was used for food; in early times, in later ones, and even with us, in some countries; it was so in Judea. We read that one of the miracles of our Lord was, the feeding of five thousand, with five barley loaves and two small fishes: (John 6:9) so Christ, in his mean estate of humiliation, is suitable and proper food for faith. He is held forth in the everlasting gospel, as food for the faith of his people, under the character of Christ crucified: We preach Christ crucified (says the apostle), to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness. Yea (he further adds), I determine not to know any thing among you; to set before you none other, as the proper object of your faith to feed upon, and receive comfort and nourishment from, save Jesus Christ and him crucified. It was upon him he himself lived: I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God; who loved me, and gave himself for me.—So much for the quality of this sheaf of the first-fruits; it was of barley.

Next its quantity. It was but one; one sheaf that was waved; one omer, which was the tenth part of an ephah. (Exod. 16:36) It was as much as a man could eat in one day. Christ, in many respects, is but one. One with his divine Father in nature and essence. I and my Father are one. (John 10:30) He means particularly in power. He is speaking of his power in keeping his sheep committed to him, so that none shall perish, or any pluck them out of his hands: and he adds, and my Father, who gave them me, is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hands. And then, for the further confirmation of their security, being in his and his Father's hands, he adds,

I and my Father are one: possessed of the same divine power. He, the Father, and the blessed Spirit, are one God. There is but one God: Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. (Deut. 6:4) Now the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, are this one Jehovah.

Christ is one in his person, though he has two natures, human and divine. This is the great mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh. The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. The Word was God, as to his divine nature; was made flesh, as to his human nature: and these two, though different and distinct, yet they are united in one person, the one person of the Son of God. The human nature is not a person of itself; it had its subsistence in the person of the Son of God: and there is much of the wisdom and grace of God in this matter. Had the human nature of Christ been a person subsisting of itself, all the actions done thereby, and the sufferings underwent therein, would have been found of no use to any, unless it was to that person; but this being taken into union with the divine person of the Son of God, all those actions and sufferings received an infinite efficacy and virtue, to answer the purposes of grace in our salvation. Christ is but one in his office as Mediator: the one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus; who has interposed between God and man, and made up the breach between them: who is our peace, and by whom the way is opened for us to God. Through him we (both Jews and Gentiles) have access: he is the new and living way to the Father, and he is the only way. There is but one way: no man can come to the Father, but by him. It is in his name, and by making mention of his righteousness, and of his only, that we can draw nigh unto God, with any degree of freedom; or to any good purpose. He is the one and only Saviour and Redeemer; his arm, and that alone, without the help of any other, has brought salvation. He is the only one to whom we must apply for salvation; to whom we are directed, from whom we are encouraged to hope for it, and that by himself. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else. (Isa. 45:22) There is no other Saviour besides him; nor is there any other from whom salvation can be expected: and therefore to him must be given all the glory. He is the one Lord, as the apostle says, One Lord, one faith, one baptism. (Eph. 4:5) One Lord, to whom we are to yield obedience; even to all his commands

and ordinances. Though there are many that are called Lords; (there were among the Heathens) yet to us, as Christians, there is but one Lord Jesus Christ, and we by him. Though other Lords, as sin and Satan, and the world, in unregeneracy, had dominion over us; yet now, through grace, it is our resolution, that by him, and him alone, will we make mention of his name; (Isa. 26:13) that is, we will only serve him. He is the only head of the church, whom the Father has given to be head over all things unto it: a head of eminence to rule over, and guide, and protect it. A head of influence; as the natural head is to the body, from which it receives its nourishment, and increases. And he is the only husband of the church: thy maker is thine husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name. (Isa. 54:5) And though good men may, through the prevalence of temptation and corruption, go after other lovers, yet they are recovered again; and their resolution, in the strength of divine grace, is, to go and return to their first husband; for then it was better with them than now. (Hosea 2:7) Thus, in many respects, Christ is but one, as this sheaf was.

But then, though this sheaf was but one, it had many stalks, many ears of corn, and many grains in it. And so Christ, though he is but one in various respects, as we have seen; yet in him there is a complication. There is a complication of blessings of grace. Jehovah has presented him, from all eternity, in the council and covenant of grace and peace, with all the blessings of grace and goodness for his people; he has put them all into his hands, and blessed them with all spiritual blessings in him, and he is of God (as saith the apostle) made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. (1 Cor. 1:20) So that they have all blessings of grace in him, and from him; and are enabled to say, in the strength of faith, at times, as Jacob did, "I have enough, I have all things." For, saith the apostle, all things are yours; and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. (1 Cor. 3:21, 23)

Moreover, he has not only a complication of all blessings in him; but as this sheaf of the first-fruits represented the whole harvest, and was a pledge and earnest of it, so Christ, the sheaf of the first-fruits, represents all his people. They are all gathered together under one head in him; and when he was crucified, they were with him; when he was buried, they were with him; when he rose again from the

dead, they rose again with him; and are now sat down in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. And besides, as the sheaf of the first-fruits, had a connection with all the rest, so he with all the people of God. It was for their sakes he suffered, died, and rose from the dead. He suffered, to gather together the children of God, that were scattered abroad. He was delivered into the hands of justice and death, for their transgressions; and he arose again for the justification of them all.—So much for the first thing: that the sheaf of the first-fruits was typical of Christ, as to the matter of it, both as to quality and quantity.

II. It was so, with respect to what was done unto it, and done with it. This was, as has already been observed, first reaped, then brought to the court, and then, after a variety of ceremonies, it was waved before the Lord. First it was reaped. And this was done in a very solemn and pompous manner, according to the account the Jews give of it, which is this; the messengers of the Sanhedrim went out (from Jerusalem, over the brook Kidron, to the fields near it), on the evening of the feast, and bound the standing corn in bundles, that so it might be more easily reaped; and the inhabitants of all the neighbouring villages gathered together there, that it might be reaped in great pomp; and when it was dark, one said to them, Is the sun set? They said, Yes. With this sickle shall I reap it? They said, Yes. In this basket shall I put it? They said, Yes. If on a sabbath-day, he said to them, On this sabbath-day shall I do it? They said, Yes. These questions were put and answered three times: then they reaped it, and put it into the basket, and brought it to the court.

Now this reaping of the sheaf of first-fruits was an emblem of the apprehending of our Lord Jesus Christ by the Jews, or by officers which they sent to take him. They attempted this once and again, before they accomplished it. We are told in the seventh chapter of John, that at the feast of tabernacles they sought to lay hold of him; but his time was not yet come. The very officers were dispirited; and when they were called to an account by the chief priests and pharisees, for not bringing him, they said, Never man spake like this man. They could not take him. But when the set time was come, he was easily apprehended by them. And as we are told they bound the ears of corn, that they might be the more easily reaped; so they bound Christ, and brought him to the high Priest. (John

18:12) This was done at night, when it was dark. One of the questions asked at the reaping of the sheaf of the first-fruits, was, Is the sun set? It was answered, Yes: then the sickle was put in. So it was after sun was set, the Lord Jesus Christ was apprehended. After he had eaten the passover with his disciples, he entered into discourse with them, and said, All ye shall be offended, because of me, this night. Simon Peter, very bold in the cause of his master, says, Though, all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended. To whom our Lord answers, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, that this night, before the cock crow thou shalt deny me thrice. (Mark 14:30) And that it was night when he was apprehended, is clear from the account given of Judas, who, with his band of soldiers went into the garden with lanthorns and torches to take him. And the account of the Lord's Supper, given by the apostle, confirms it, who says, "That our Lord Jesus Christ, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread." (1 Cor. 11:23)

And as the sheaf was reaped by a deputation of men, sent by the grand Sanhedrim at Jerusalem; so our Lord was apprehended by officers, sent by chief priests and pharisees, who were assembled together in council, as the great Sanhedrin of the nation. They met together just before the time of our Lord's apprehension and sufferings, as they had done in vain many times before, but now with success. They met together to contrive ways and means to put him to death. An opportunity presented. Judas came and offered to betray him for such a sum of money; and he, with a band of men, went into the garden, where he knew our Lord used to resort; and there they apprehended him. And this was done in the sight and presence of a multitude of persons, just as the sheaf of the first-fruits was reaped in the presence of multitudes from all towns round about.

That this was true of Christ is certain from what is recorded by the evangelists; for we are told, that Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude, went in order to apprehend him. (Mark 14:43) Besides the hand of soldiers, he had of the scribes and pharisees, the chief priests and elders, there were a multitude of the common people that attended to see the issue of things: to whom our Lord said, Are ye come out as against a thief, with swords and staves for to take me. (Mark 14:48)

Likewise, the circumstance of the sheaf of first-fruits being reaped near the brook Kidron, exactly agrees with the apprehending of Christ near that brook. It was over this same brook our Lord went, and entered into the garden where he was taken. (And in this he appeared to be the antitype of David, who when he fled from Absalom went over the brook Kidron. Cedron, or Kidron, signifies black: so that brook had its name from the blackness of the water, through the soil that run into it; being a kind of common sewer, into which the Jews cast every thing that was unclean and defiling. And perhaps it is in allusion to this that the Psalmist prophetically said, He shall drink, of the brook in the way). (Ps. 110:7) Now it is remarkable, that in these minute circumstances, as some of them seem to be, there should be such an agreement.

When this sheaf was reaped, then it was brought to the court; so Christ, when he was first apprehended was brought to Annas, then to Caiaphas, then to the court where, after his arraignment and trial, he was condemned to death. This sheaf being brought to court, was threshed, winnowed, dried, and parched by the fire, and ground in a mill; all which set forth, in a lively manner, the dolorous sufferings of our Lord. The sheaf being threshed, was expressive of his being smitten by men; of his being buffeted and scourged, by the order of the Roman Governor, by the soldiers; all in perfect agreement with the prophecy, that they should smite the Judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek. (Micah 5:1) That he should give his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them which plucked off the hair. (Isa. 50:6)

This sheaf of the first-fruits, as it was beaten out, so it was dried and parched by the fire; which may be considered as expressive of the wrath of God which Christ endured; which is compared to fire, and by which (as it is expressed in the Psalms concerning him) his strength was dried up like a potsherd. It was ground also in a mill (as was the manna, another type of Christ): (Num. 11:8) which was another circumstance that pointed out the sufferings of the Redeemer, who was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities.

Upon I he omer of flour that was taken, oil and frankincense were poured: which may denote, the acceptableness of Christ in his sufferings, death, and sacrifice to his divine Father. He gave himself for us, an

offering and a sacrifice unto God for a sweet smelling savour. And then the waving of this by the priest before the Lord, seems to denote his resurrection from the dead. This action, indeed, literally understood, was expressive of an acknowledgment to the Lord of heaven and earth; that the fruits of the earth, and the plentiful harvest were of him, and to give him the praise and the glory of it. But typically considered, it represented the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead. (And remarkable it is, he rose from the dead on the very day the sheaf of the first-fruits was waved). That which confirms this, is what I have already observed from the great apostle of the Gentiles, who tells us, Christ is risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept: this makes me conclude, that this waving the sheaf, denotes, the resurrection of Christ. He is the first-fruits of them that slept; the earnest of the resurrection from the dead to his people: he insures that to them, being the representative of them. He is the first that rose from the dead to an immortal life: for though there were others that were raised before him, as the son of the widow of Sarepta, the Shunamite's son, and the man that was let down into the grave of the prophet Elisha: all which took place before the coming of Christ. And after his coming, before his resurrection, there were many raised from the dead and raised by himself, which was one proof he gave of being the Messiah. The dead are raised; (Luke 7:22) how many we cannot say; but instances we have upon record, as Jairus's daughter, Lazarus, the favorite of our Lord, and others. But then he was the first that rose by his own power into an immortal life. He arose by his own power. Destroy this temple (said he, meaning his body) and in three days I will raise it up; (John 2:19) and accordingly he being put to death, raised himself the third day; for he had power (which no mere man had) to lay down his life, and takes it up again, And by doing this, especially the latter, he declared himself to be the Son of God with power. (Rom. 1:4)

He was the first that arose to an immortal life. All the rest rose from the dead, but died again; but he, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. He was dead, but is alive, and lives for evermore, and hath the keys of hell and of death. Jehovah the Father shewed him the path of life; and he was the first that trod therein. There were

some indeed raised at the time of his resurrection, as it is written, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves, after his resurrection. (Matt. 27:52, 53) And in all probability these rose to immortal life, and went triumphantly to heaven with our risen Lord; but then this was after his resurrection; so that he was the first that arose to an immortal life.

And as Christ rose first in order of time, so he rose the first in dignity. He rose as the head of the body, as the first born, the beginning, that in all things he might appear to have, as he ought to have, the pre-eminence. He did not rise again as a mere individual, as a single person, but as a public head and representative of all his people. He also is the first in causality. He is the procuring cause of the resurrection from the dead. He not only by the gospel brought life and immortality to light; but, by his obedience, sufferings, and death, has opened the way of life. He came to this end; that we might have life, spiritual and eternal; so true is that saying of the apostle, that as by man came death, by man came also the resurrection from the dead. And he is the pattern and exemplar, according to which the saints will be raised; as my dead body shall they arise. (Isa. 26:19) Just as his dead body arose, so shall the dead bodies of all the saints arise in the resurrection morn: they shall be fashioned like unto his glorious body. Was he raised incorruptible? so shall they. So saith the apostle, the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. (1 Cor. 15:52, 53) As his body was raised a powerful body, so shall theirs. He was crucified through weakness; but being raised by the power of God, it became a powerful body. So saints shall be raised in power, no more subject to weaknesses and infirmities, as now; no more liable to disorders and diseases, or to death itself: neither of them shall have any power over them. As his body was raised a glorious one so shall theirs also. It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ: (Phil. 3:21) shining not only as stars, but as the sun in the firmament of heaven. As his was raised a spiritual body, so shall theirs too. Not a new aerial and celestial body, as some have dreamed; no, but a spiritual one. Not as to substance, but as to quality; that shall be supported without eating and

drinking. The organs thereof will be fitted for spiritual exercises, and he wholly under the influence of the Spirit of God; and be no more an incumbrance to the spirit or soul of man.

And, as Christ's risen body was the same body that was crucified and slain; (which appears from the marks upon it. Except, says Thomas, I shall see the prints of the nails in his hands, I will not believe: and these were shewn him. And our Lord, to convince his disciples that it was the same body, said, Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I, myself. Handle me, and see: for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have; (Luke 24:39)) so the same body of the saints that dies, shall he raised from the dead. Job himself firmly believed this, In my flesh shall I see God; whom mine eyes shall behold, and not another. (Job 19:25, 27) So the apostle, this corruptible (pointing to his body) must put on incorruption. (1 Cor. 15:53)

Christ is the efficient cause of the resurrection. The procuring cause as Mediator; the exemplar, as man; the efficient cause, as God; for as the Father quickens whom he will, so the Son. It will be by his voice the dead will arise; some to everlasting life, and some to everlasting shame and contempt. And herein will he a display both of his Omnipotence and Omniscience. Of his Omnipotence, that he has the keys of hell and death; and can open the graves, and set the prisoners free. The raising the dead is a work of Omnipotence; as the raising of Christ's body was, so the raising of the bodies of the saints will be. Our Lord will by this shew himself to be the mighty God. There will also be a display of his Omniscience. He must needs be omniscient, that knows where the dust of his saints lies. Though dispersed here and there; yet has he undertaken (and it was an obligation laid upon him) to raise it up at the last day; and so he will. Thus we have seen the waving of the sheaf pointed out the resurrection of Christ from the dead: but this is not all.

It is also expressive of his connection with his people, whom he represented: and whose resurrection is the pledge, earnest, and security of theirs. For, as the first-fruits sanctified the rest of their harvest, represented the whole, gave a right to the in-gathering of it, and insured it; so our Lord's resurrection from the dead, sanctified and secured the resurrection of his people. Because he lives, they shall live also: or as

sure as his dead body arose, so sure shall theirs rise also. But then he is only the first-fruits of his own. Christ the first-fruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming. Who are the fruits of his sufferings and death; who have the first-fruits of his Spirit and grace in them: the fruits of righteousness upon them; who are his, by virtue of the Father's gift unto him, as also by the purchase of his blood, the efficacy of his grace upon them, and through a voluntary dedication of themselves unto him, under the influence of his Spirit and grace. The first-fruits of these and these only. Not but that there will be a resurrection both of the just and the unjust; the sea and the grave will give up all the dead, and among these will be some whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life. These will appear before the judgment seat of Christ to receive the things done in the body; but the saints, whom Christ is the representative of, will arise by virtue of the union to their living Lord and head. Not so the wicked; only by virtue of his power exerted upon them they will arise, and that to everlasting shame and confusion.—Thus we have seen, this sheaf was a type of Christ, with respect to what was done to it. Now it remains only to observe,

III. What were the concomitants or it. What accompanied the waving the first-fruits, were a burnt-offering, and a meat-offering. (Lev. 23:12-14) The first of these was an eminent type of Christ, as all the burnt-offerings were. It was a lamb: a figure of Christ the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. A Lamb without blemish: a type of the immaculate Lamb of God. This was a burnt-offering; so a fit emblem of the dolorous sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ. Then there was a meat-offering, which always went along with this; which was typical of Christ, as we have seen in a former discourse (Sermon 20). I shall close all with a word or two.

From hence we see the great advantages we receive from Christ, He is the first-fruits, and all our fruit is from him. This remarkable type in a particular manner points out the many benefits we receive from the sufferings, death and resurrection of Christ, who was apprehended, beaten and scourged: who endured the wrath of the Almighty, and that in our room and stead. The fruits of which are, our redemption from the curse of the law, the remission of sins, peace and reconciliation with God, pardon of sin, and justification. Many are the advantages also accruing to

us from the resurrection of Christ. Our justification is owing thereunto; he rose again for our justification. Our regeneration is in virtue of it; we are begotten to a lively hope of a glorious inheritance by the resurrection of Christ from the dead. The resurrection of our bodies in the last day are insured hereby; because he lives we shall live also. And therefore many are the obligations we lay under to give thanks unto his name and not forget his benefits. We ought, through the constraints of his love, to live to him who died for us.

And how much ought this night to be observed in which we are about to commemorate the sufferings and death of a dear Redeemer! As it is said of the night of the passover, when the Israelites were in such a remarkable manner delivered and saved. It is a night to be much observed in all generations; so the night in which the antitypical sheaf of the first-fruits was reaped, in which our Lord was apprehended; in which he was betrayed; in which he was brought before the great Sanhedrin and there condemned. The consequence of which was, his sufferings and death; which laid a foundation for the everlasting salvation of all that believe in him, it is a night to be much observed in all the churches of Christ until the second coming of our Lord.

7 Paul's Farewell Discourse At Ephesus.

ACTS 20:32

And now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

This passage is part of the last words of the apostle Paul, to the elders of the church at Ephesus, whom he had called together to deliver his mind unto. He was an eminent instance of divine grace, and an excellent preacher of that grace, which he was made a partaker of. His work lay chiefly in the Gentile world; great part of which he traveled over; and, wherever he came, spread the gospel of the grace of God. Thousands of souls were converted under his ministry; and it is hard to say, how many Churches were planted by his hands. The conquests which he, through mighty grace, was enabled to make, were far superior to those of Alexander, or of Caesar; and now he is returning to Jerusalem like a triumphant conqueror, as having with success fought the Lord's battles in those parts. And, in his way thither, calls at Miletus, convenes the elders

of the church of Ephesus, and declares his manner of entrance and his behaviour among them; how he had kept back nothing which was profitable to them, had used no artful methods to conceal his principles, but had made it his study, to declare all the council of God, and that in a way intelligible to the meanest capacities. This he did openly and publicly; testifying, both to Jews and Greeks repentance towards God, and faith toward, our Lord Jesus Christ. Though, in so doing, he ran the greatest risk of his life, yet none of these things moved him; neither did he count his life dear to himself, so that he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry which he had received of the Lord Jesus to testify the gospel of the grace of God. And knowing that they to whom he had preached, and to whose souls he had been useful, should see his face no more; he takes them, as witnesses of his faithfulness, and to shew his regard and care for them to the last, advises them to take heed both to themselves and to the flock of God; and assures them, that after his departure, grievous wolves would enter, and not spare the flock; and that even some among themselves should arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciple after them. And now, having discharged a good conscience, and acted the part of a faithful minister, he takes his leave; and having no longer the care of them, as a faithful shepherd, commits them again into the hands of him who had made them his care and charge, in the words which I have read. And now brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, &c. In which may be observed the three things:

I. An Endearing appellation, which he gives them, Brethren.

II. An instance of his regard unto them, and affection for them; and that is, commending them to God, and to the word of his grace. And,

III. The motives which induced the apostle to commend them to God, and to the word of his grace.

I. Here is an endearing appellation which he gives them, Brethren. This was a usual and familiar way of speaking among the Jews. Nothing more frequent with them, than to call any who were of their own country and nation, Brethren; though no otherwise allied unto them, in the bonds of consanguinity, Thus the apostle Paul calls all the Jews, being his countrymen, Brethren and Kinsmen according to the flesh, for whose salvation he had a great concern;

which we must not suppose to be confined to those of his own tribe and family only. And so Stephen begins his oration thus; men, brethren, and fathers. And perhaps, from this usual way of speaking among the Jews, the primitive saints took up this appellation, and gave it to each other. Sometimes we find it given to the multitude of believers, or such who were in private capacity in the churches, as distinct from apostles and elders. Thus it is said; The apostles, and elders, and brethren send greeting, unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch. In our text it is given to the elders, particularly, whom Paul calls so; either because they were partakers of the same grace, and so had this title in common with the rest of believers, or else, on account of their office, being labourers together in the Lord's vineyard. And here may be observed the humility of the apostle; who was far superior to them in gifts, office, and usefulness. His gifts were, no doubt, far greater than theirs; and so was his office, being an extraordinary minister, an apostle of the Gentiles; and his usefulness abundantly exceeded theirs. Yet he does not treat them with an haughty and assuming air, but puts himself upon a level with them, and calls them brethren. Thus imitating his Lord and master; who, being of the same nature with us, is not ashamed to call us brethren, though he himself is Lord of all.

II. Here is an instance of his regard unto them; and affection for them; which appears incommending them to God, and to the word of his grace.

We are not to suppose that, in this commendation, the apostle intends the elders only, but the church also. These were addressed, as being officers and representatives of the church, and as men capable of delivering to it, what the apostle should say to them. There are three things to be considered in this commendation.

1. The persons to whom the brethren are here commended.

2. The act itself, and what is intended by it.

3. What induced the apostle to commend the saints as he does.

First, The persons to whom the brethren are commended; that is, God, and the word of his grace.

1. They are commended to God; by whom is meant God the Father. The apostle, in commending them to him, commends them to his grace, wisdom, and power. To his Grace; to supply their need; to fit them

for every duty he shall call them to, and for every trial he shall exercise them with. Such a commendation suits both ministers, and private believers. The former, who, notwithstanding all their learning, parts, and gifts, are insufficient for their work, without fresh supplies of divine grace. And private believers, under all their trials and afflictions, should make their application to God, who sits upon a throne of grace, and has promised that his grace shall be sufficient for them; which they always find, more or less, made good unto them. Such a commendation as this you find in Acts 14:23, 26. They are also commended to his wisdom, to counsel and direct them in all their ways. Such a commendation is proper and useful, both to elders and others. Elders have need of wisdom from above, to behave themselves aright among the churches of the living God. Believers in common also, in their several states and conditions, should not lean to their own understandings, but acknowledge God in all their ways, who has promised to direct their paths. They should commit themselves to him, to be guided with his counsel, and directed by his wisdom; because the way of man is not in himself. It is not in man that walketh, to direct his steps. Likewise, the saints are commended to the power of God, to keep and preserve them. For it is by that alone they are kept; being weak and liable to daily back-slidings. They therefore should commit themselves to him, who is able to keep them from falling, and to present them faultless, before the throne of his glory, with exceeding joy. This they should do, to keep them from the sins and corruptions of the times; and from the errors and heresies which are now broached. They should with Jabez pray, that God would keep them from evil, that it may not grieve them: not only from the evil of punishment, but from the evil of sin, which brings it; which, as it dishonours God, so it wounds their own souls. We should not imagine, that we are able to keep ourselves, from being carried away therewith. The greatest believer, who has the largest measure of grace, if God should withdraw, leave him to himself, and not grant him fresh supplies of his grace, would not be able, with all the grace he has received, to withstand the snares of the world, the temptations of Satan, and the corruptions of his own heart. We should always suspect our own hearts, and put no confidence in them. For, who can understand his errors? Therefore we should, with David pray, That

God would cleanse us from secret faults, and keep us back from presumptuous sins.

Saints should commend themselves to God, to be kept from error and heresies; and so the saints are here commended to God, for this purpose. It is manifest that the apostle had a regard to this; for he had observed, in the preceding verses, that grievous wolves should enter among them and that persons from among themselves should arise speaking perverse things, and should draw away disciples after them; and therefore he commends them to God, to be kept from falling in therewith. He commends them to one, who is able to preserve them safe unto an inheritance when false teachers, and those who followed their pernicious ways, should bring upon themselves swift destruction. Though the elect of God cannot totally and finally be seduced by men, who lie in wait to deceive; yet they may fall from their steadfastness in the doctrine of faith; and therefore such a commendation of them to God, is very proper; that they may not be like children tossed to and fro, with every wind of doctrine. For that is both unbecoming and uncomfortable to them. Let not, therefore, the most established saint in the doctrine of faith presume in his own strength, and think himself immovable; but being conscious of his own weakness, let him commend himself to God, who is able to keep him from the evil of the world, and the errors of the times.

2. The apostle commendeth them to the word of divine grace. By which I understand, not the gospel, or the written word, but the Lord Jesus Christ; who is frequently in Scripture called, λόγος, or the Word. John makes mention of Christ under this name or title, in all his writings; in his gospel, in his epistles, and in his Revelation. He makes use of it in his gospel, chapter 1:1. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Which manifestly declares his Deity, Eternity and Co-existence with the Father: and that he is a person distinct from him: and that we may not be at a loss which Person in the Trinity he intends, by the Word, he tells us, (in verse 14) that this Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. Also mention is made of Christ, under this name, by John in his epistles. That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, and our hands have handled of the word of Life. (John 1:1) Christ was

from eternity with the Father, but has been manifested in the flesh; and the apostle informs us, that it was not imaginary, but real flesh, which he assumed. This he proves against some heretics of that day, by three of the natural senses, hearing, seeing, and feeling. They heard him speak; they saw him walk, eat, drink, &c, and they handled him, and thereby knew that it was a real body which he assumed, and not a phantom. He calls him the Word of Life, because he is life itself, and the author and donor of it. In chapter 5:7, where he takes notice of three who bear record in heaven, he tells us, that they are the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and, that these three are one. So likewise in his Revelation, he speaks of him more than once, as the Word. In chapter 1:2. he tells us, that he bore record of the Word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ. And in chapter 19:13, he represents Christ as a triumphant conqueror, and says, that his name is called, The Word of God.

Now the reason why John makes use of this name, seems to be, because it was well known to the Jews, being frequently used in their Targums; some of which were then wrote. It is also thought by some, that λόγος, being a term used by Plato, and his followers, as expressive of something divine; and Ebion and Cerenthus, with whom John had to do, understanding the platonic philosophy, he makes use of this term on purpose, it not being ungrateful to them, that he might the more easily gain upon them. It is reported of Amelius, a platonic philosopher, that when he read the beginning of John's gospel, he thus broke out and said, "By Jove, this Barbarian, (meaning John) is of the same mind with our Plato, when he says, In the beginning was the Word." But I rather think, the former is the true reason why John uses it. Nor is it peculiar to him; but used by other inspired writers of the New Testament. So Luke, (chap. 1:2.), is thought to intend Christ, the Word, when he speaks of the disciples as eye witnesses and ministers of the Word; who with much greater propriety of speech, may be said to be the eye witnesses of Christ, (according to 2 Peter 1:16), than of the gospel, or the written word. And it seems very agreeable, that Luke, intending to write a history of Christ's life and actions, should, in his preface to Theophilus, make mention of him, under some name, title, or character; which he does not, if he is not intended by the Word. The apostle Paul is also

thought to use it in this sense, in Hebrews 4:12. For the Word of God, is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword; piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and the joints and marrow; and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. This, I think, is not so applicable to the written word, as to Christ. He is ζων ὁ λόγος τῷ Θεῷ, the living word of God; or the Word of God which liveth, as it may be rendered. It is true, this Word was made flesh, and was put to death therein. He was dead, but, as himself says, is now alive, and lives for evermore. He is the living Word, or Word of Life. Also he may truly be said to be ἐνεργῆς, powerful, efficacious; for so he is in his death and sufferings, being mighty to save; and now he is in his intercession at the Father's right hand. He will also, ere long, appear to be sharper than any two-edged sword, when he comes to judge the world at the last day. He will then pierce, to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow; and will shew himself to be a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Then he will bring to light the hidden things of darkness; and will let the world know, that he it is, who searcheth the reins and hearts; which, I think, cannot be said of, and applied unto, the written word. The following verse makes it still more plainly to appear, which is closely connected with this by the copulative καὶ, and. Neither is there any creature which is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. Where the apostle manifestly speaks of a person, and not of a thing; and of one who is omniscient, and to whom we must give an account at the day of judgment; for so these words in the last clause may be rendered, ὅρος οὐ ἡμῖν ὁ λόγος, to whom we must give an account. But to whom must we give an account? Not to the written word, but to a divine person, to God. Thus the apostle says, (Rom. 14:12) So then every one of us shall give an account to God. We ministers are accountable for our preaching the word, and you for hearing it; but the account must be given, not to the written word, but to Christ, the living Word. Nay, in verse 14, this Word is said to be an high priest. Christ, the Word, assumed our nature, and in it offered himself a sacrifice for us, as our High Priest; and as such, is passed into the heavens, and ever lives to make intercession for us. The apostle uses this as an argument. with believers, to hold fast their

profession, and to come with boldness to the throne of grace, for what they want. And, as the apostle uses it in this sense here, so he does, I apprehend, in the words of my text. My reasons for it are these,

1. Because the saints never commend themselves, or others, either in life or in death, to any but a Divine Person. The word signifies the committing a person or thing, to the care, charge, and protection of another. Now, none but a Divine Person is capable of taking the care and charge of the saints, neither will the saints trust any other. They commit their souls to God, as unto a faithful Creator; and rest entirely satisfied herein, as the apostle Paul was, who could say, I know in whom I have believed; (whom I have trusted with my immortal all, and with my eternal salvation) and I am persuaded he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day. (2 Tim. 1:12) Now, certainly to whom he committed himself, he committed others. Having had experience of Christ's care, faithfulness, and ability, he could here, as undoubtedly he did, commend the saints unto him, with the utmost pleasure and satisfaction. And, as in life, so in death, they commend themselves to none but a Divine Person; and that in imitation of Christ, who in his last moments said, Father into thy hands I commend my spirit.

2. Because to put the written word upon a level with the Divine Being, does not appear agreeable. A commendation of the saints, equally to the written word, as to God himself seems to be a lessening of his glory, and ascribing too much to the written word; but suits well with Christ, the essential Word, who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. To commend the saints equally to Christ, as to God the Father, is no diminution of the Father's glory; nor does it give Christ more than his due, or than he is able to perform but a commendation of them to the gospel, seems to do so.

3. Because, never in the whole book of Scripture, as far as I have observed, are the saints commended to the gospel; but rather that to them. The written word is committed to the care and keeping of the saints; not the saints to the care and keeping of that. They are in the hands, and are the care and charge of Christ Jesus. We frequently read of God committing the written word unto the saints more especially, to the ministers of it; and of their committing it to others: (See 2 Cor.

5:19; 1 Tim. 1:11-18, and 6:20; 2 Tim. 1:14, and 2:2.) but never of the saints being committed to the written word.

4. Because what is here ascribed unto it, suits better with Christ, than with the gospel, viz. which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance, &c. It may indeed be replied, That saints are here commended to God, as the efficient, and to the gospel, as the instrumental cause of their building up, and having an inheritance: the engrafted word being said to be able to save us, and the inspired writings able to make us wise unto salvation. It must be acknowledged, that the gospel, in the Spirit's hands, is an instrument of building saints up. But then Christ is the greatest master-builder; he builds the temple, and he must bear the glory. The gospel is, indeed, the map which shews us where our inheritance lies, and points out to us the right way unto it but it is Christ who gives it, and puts us into the possession of it. It is in, by, and through him, that we obtain the inheritance. Therefore, if we understand it of the gospel, it must be in a much lower sense, than if we understood it of Christ: for which reason, together with others before mentioned, I prefer the latter. Not but that the words may he profitably insisted on, agreeable to the analogy of faith, in the other sense; but then a Hendiadis must be supposed in the text, as Grotius and others think. According to which, the words, as to their sense, must be read thus: And now, brethren, I commend you to God, who, by the word of his grace, is able to build you up, &c. But I see no reason, or necessity, to suppose such a figure in the text, when there occurs a good sense of the words without it; and one far more noble than that which must be affixed to them with it, and every way as agreeable to the analogy of faith. The sense which I have given of this text, and of some others already mentioned, is not singular; but what has been observed, and approved by some valuable divines. Taking this to be the sense of the words, it will be proper to enquire these two things. Why Christ is called the Word: and why the Word of God's grace.

1. Why he is called the Word. Some think he is so called, because as the mental word, or the conception of the mind, which is called *λογος ενδια Θεου*, is the birth of the mind, begotten of it, intellectually and immaterially, without passion or motion, and is the very image and representation of the mind; of

the same nature with it, and yet something distinct from it. So Christ is the begotten of the Father, the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person; and is of the same nature with him, though a distinct person from him. But this may be thought too curious, and as falling short (as all things else in nature do) of expressing that adorable mystery of godliness. And, indeed, oftentimes, when we indulge our own curiosity, and give a loose to our thoughts this way, we run into confusion, and every evil work. For though Christ is certainly and really God, as well as man; yet I am afraid that our abstracted ideas of him, as God, of his Generation and Sonship, distinct from him, as Mediator, often lead us into labyrinths, and draw off our minds from the principal things we have in view. God having set bounds around his inscrutable and incomprehensible Deity, as he ordered to be set about mount Sinai, when he descended on it; that we may not too curiously gaze upon it, and perish. It seems to be his will, that our saving knowledge of him, and converse with him, should be all in and through Christ the glorious Mediator. With this we should be contented. It is enough for us, that this Divine Person, who is called *λογος*, the Word, is God; for John expresses it in so many words. As for those who deny it, they are not worth regarding; but ought to be treated as the enemies of Christ's Person and Glory. I rather think that he is called the Word, from some action or actions, which he has done, or still continues to do. That the Jews, in their Targums, understood by the word *Memra*, which they so frequently make use of, a Divine Person, seems plain and undeniable; and that this was the promised Messiah, is as manifest.

I will only name one place, in the room of many, which makes it appear, and that is, Hosea 1:7, which we thus read; But I will have mercy on the house of Judah, and will save them by the Lord their God. The Targum thus: But I will have mercy on the house of Judah, and will redeem them by the Word of the Lord their God.—Now I apprehend, that Christ is called the Word.

1. Because he spake for his people in the council of peace; and covenanted with his Father on their account. He then presented himself, and in effect, said, "I will be surety for these persons; of my hand shalt thou require them. And though it is certain, that they will fall into the depths of sin and misery; and bring

themselves into the most ruinous circumstances; and become altogether undeserving of thy regard: yet, if I bring them not unto thee, and set them before thee, in all that glory which I viewed them in, in the glass of thine eternal decrees, then let me bear the blame for ever." When, in this ancient council, the method of man's salvation was agreed upon; he addressed his Father, and signified his ready compliance with his will, after this manner: Sacrifice and offerings thou wouldst not; in burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin, thou hast had no pleasure. As if he said, It appears to be thy will, that man should not be saved by any sacrifice of his own, whatever. Then said I, Lo, I come, (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God. (Heb. 10:5-7) The whole covenant of grace, which is an everlasting one, ordered in all things, and sure, was made with him, as the Word. He spoke for every blessing, and every promise of grace, in that covenant, for his people; and entered into articles with his Father, for the security of them. You have a text (Haggai 2:4, 5), which speaks of Christ, as the Word, with whom God covenanted; where the Lord, by the prophet Haggai exhorts Zerubbabel, and Josedech the high Priest, and all the people of the land to be strong, and work, in rebuilding the temple; and for their encouragement says, For I am with you, saith the Lord of Hosts; according to the Word, that I covenanted with you, when ye came out of Egypt; so my Spirit remaineth among you. Here all the Three Persons are mentioned. Here is Jehovah, the Lord of Hosts, the first Person, who promises to be with them; together with the Word, the second Person. The words, according to, are not in the Hebrew text; which Janius renders, *Cum verbo, quo pepigerum vobiscum*. That is, with the Word, in, or with whom I covenanted with you: and in his notes on the text, applies it to Christ, as it should be. So my Spirit, the third Person, stands and abides among you, to make application of it, and see all made good; which I, and my Word, have covenanted about and agreed upon.

2. He is called the Word, because he spake all things out of nothing, in the first creation. Moses and John entirely agree in their account of the creation; and it remaineth no longer a mystery, why Moses so often, in the history of the creation, takes notice that God said, Let it be so, and it was so. For it was God the Word that said so; as appears from what the evangelist

says, (John 1:2, 3) when he tells us, that the Word was in the beginning with God; that all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. All the three Persons had a hand in the creation of the universe; as may be observed from the three first verses of the first chapter of Genesis. It was God the first Person, who created the rude unformed mass. It was the Spirit of God, the third Person, who moved upon the face of the waters. And it was God the Word, the second Person, who said, Let there be light and there was light. All which three Persons, as being concerned in creation, are mentioned by the Psalmist in one verse: By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the hosts of them, by the breath of his mouth. (Ps. 33:6, 9) Where are Jehovah the Father, the first Person; and Christ the Word, the Second; and the Breath, or Spirit of his mouth, the Third. And because of Christ's particular concern herein, in speaking, and it was done; in commanding, and it stood fast: he is called the Word.

3. Because he is to us the interpreter of the Father's mind; like as our words, or speech, which is called λογος προφορικος, verbum prolatum, or the word expressed, is the interpreter of our minds. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him. Christ is the Word, who hath discovered the secrets of the Father's grace, the hidden purposes of his heart; and hath declared his mind and will to his people in all generations. It was he, the Word of the Lord God, whose voice Adam heard in the garden. It was he the Word, who said unto Adam, Where art thou? And it was the same Word of the Lord, who continued his discourse with him, his wife, and the serpent: and made the first discovery of grace to fallen man. It was he, the Word, who appeared to the patriarchs and prophets in after ages; and made still greater discoveries of God's mind and will: but never so full and clearly as when he was made flesh, and dwelt among us. For then God, who at sundry times and divers manners, spake in times past unto the fathers, by the prophets, did in these last days speak unto us by his Son. He, the Word, has spoken all his mind, and has made the clearest discoveries of his grace that ever was.

4. He the Word, who now speaks for us in the court of heaven. He there appears in the presence of God for

us; acts the part of an advocate; demands the blessings of grace for us, as the fruit of his death; pleads our cause, and answers all charges and accusations. His blood speaks better things for us, than that of Abel. Now for such reasons as these I am inclined to think that Christ is called the Word. But,

2. Why is he called the word of God's grace? I answer,

1. Because in him is highly displayed and revealed, his Father's grace to poor sinners. God in pitching upon him to be a Saviour, and in sending him, his only begotten Son; and not sparing him, but giving him up into the hands of justice, commends his love to sinners, and shews forth the exceeding riches of his grace.

2. Because in him, it hath pleased the Father, that all fulness of grace should dwell. Saints behold him, as full of grace and truth; rejoice in him, and receive from his fulness grace for grace. I shall now consider,

Secondly, The act itself of commending them, which signifies to commit to the care, keeping and protection of another; depending upon his ability and fidelity. Thus the apostle must be supposed to commit the saints to the care, keeping, and protection, of God the Father and of God the Son; being well assured of the ability and fidelity of them both. And his commending them to both, not only shews the equal esteem and regard he had for them; but also the greatness of his concern for the brethren here. This act of his must be considered prayer wise, as expressing the desires of his soul, that God, and the Word of his grace, would take them under their care, and preserve them safe to glory. Or else as an advice, or direction, to whom they should make application, and whence they might expect comfort, support, and safety. And so it is much like the advice which Paul gave to Timothy, when he said, My son be strong in the grace which is in Christ Jesus. I proceed now to consider,

Thirdly, The motives which induced the apostle to commend the saints into the hands of those divine persons. This is expressed in the following part of the text. Which, or who, is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance, among all them that are sanctified. This may have reference, either to God or to the Word of his grace. I rather choose to consider the apostle as referring to the latter. I have already hinted what might induce the apostle to commend them unto

God; namely, his grace, wisdom, and power; nor need we wonder, that he also commends them to Christ, seeing he is the Word of God's grace. All fulness of grace is treasured up in him. Here are two things particularly mentioned, which seem to be the motives that induced the apostle to commend them to Christ, the Word of God's grace.

1. Because he is able to build them up. Ministers are instruments in building up of saints. They ministerially lay the foundation, Christ. All the gifts and graces of the Spirit, which are bestowed upon them, are for the edifying Christ's body, the church: and though they have not dominion over people's faith; yet they are oftentimes blessed and made useful, to be helpers of their joy. Saints also may be useful one to another, to build up one another on their most holy faith; by praying together, by conversing with each other, and declaring what God has done for their souls. But Christ is the great master builder. He is the chief architect; and, except he, the Lord, build the house, they labour in vain that build it. The work is his. He is the builder; and he is the, foundation on which saints are built, and the corner stone that knits them altogether, though they have lived in the world at different times, and in different parts, and are of different denominations. It is he that raises, and finishes, the noble superstructure of grace in the soul. He only having begun the work, is able to finish it and he will do it. We may be confident of it; for he is both the author and finisher of faith.

2. Another reason why the apostle commends the saints, not only to God, but also to the Word of his grace is; because he is able to give them an inheritance among them that are sanctified. And here are two things to be considered. The inheritance which he gives; and the persons among whom it lies.

1. The inheritance which Christ gives. This is the heavenly glory. That inheritance which Peter (1 Peter 1:4) speaks of, and says, that it is incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeth not away, reserved in heaven. This is not procured by the works of the law; for the inheritance is not of the law; neither are they, who are of the law, heirs. It is true, we read of the reward of the inheritance: but then it must be understood of a reward of grace, not of debt. For Christ gives the inheritance freely. He took possession of it in the name of his people, and is, as I may say, a feoffee in

trust for them. He is made heir of all things, and the saints are co-heirs with him. He gives them a title to it, which is his own justifying righteousness; and the evidence and earnest of it, which is his own Spirit. It is he that makes them meet for it, by his own grace, and will ere long put them into the possession of it, saying, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world.

2. The persons among whom it lies. These are, all them that are sanctified: which at once points out the persons to whom it belongs, and discovers the excellency of it. The persons to whom it belongs are, all those that are sanctified. That is, who are set apart by divine grace, and distinguished from others, by a sovereign act of love, for the enjoyment of this blessing. So the word is used, Jude verse 1, where Jude inscribes his epistle, and wishes an increase of mercy, peace and love, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Christ Jesus, and called. That is, who are set apart and distinguished from others, by the electing love of the Father; preserved in the hands of Christ, the head of the everlasting covenant, notwithstanding their fall in Adam, and their numerous transgressions; and called by the grace of the Spirit, to be partakers of all that which is prepared and designed for them. Or else, by sanctified ones, are meant, such as are sanctified by the Spirit of God; have a principle of grace and holiness wrought in them: and are enabled by faith to deal with Christ, for sanctification as well as righteousness. For much of a believer's holiness lies in faith's acting and living upon, dealing with, and receiving from Christ, grace for grace; and, therefore, in another text, this inheritance is said to be, among them which are sanctified by faith, that is in me.

Thus I have endeavoured to explain the text, and shall conclude with a few words, by way of reflection upon the whole.

1. Hence it appears, to whom souls should make application in their time of need; that is, to God, and to the Word of his grace. Here only may they expect relief; from hence their wants may be supplied. Here they may rest in safety, depending upon divine ability and fidelity. Souls, here, have the greatest encouragement they can wish for to come and make application under all their trials. For one of these divine persons is the God of all grace; and the other has an inexhaustible fulness of all grace dwelling in him. The apostle knew

what he did when he commended the brethren to these sublime Persons; and those souls may rest entirely satisfied, who have committed themselves into their hands; for, from thence, none can pluck them.

2. This evidently shews, that those ministers have the greatest concern for souls, who commend them to God, and to the Word of his grace; who direct them to Christ, and his fulness; and not to their own works or frames, but to the grace that is in him.

3. It is also manifest, that such commendations and directions as these, are likely to meet with most success. It is the most likely way to build up souls, by sending them to Christ and his grace; and not to pore upon their own frames and duties. When the minister has given them a long bead roll of marks and signs, what is the consequence of it? Plucking down, and not building up. Says one, "I am none of Christ's for I have not done so and so." "Nor am I in such and such frames of soul;" says another, "therefore the work of grace was never begun in me," So that here is tearing, rending, plucking down, and denying the very work of the Spirit, instead of building up; and what else can be expected from it? If souls would be edified and built up, they must go to Christ, and his grace; and if ministers would be useful that way, they must direct them to that great fountain of supplies.

4. Let us adore boundless grace, that we have the God of all grace, and the Word of grace to apply to; and that we have any reason to believe that these divine Persons have took the care and charge of us; we having been enabled, by an act of faith, to commit ourselves to them; believing that they are able to build us up, and to give us an inheritance among all them that are sanctified.

8 The Law Established By The Gospel

A Sermon,

Preached March 22, 1739, at the Monthly Exercise of Prayer, at the Reverend Mr. Wilson's Meeting-House in Goodman's-Field

ROMANS 3:31

Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law.

That vice and immorality, disobedience to the laws of God and men, prevail among us; and that practical religion and powerful godliness greatly decline, will he acknowledged by every serious, thoughtful, and

considering Christian; but what are the springs and sources of this sad scene of things, or to what all this is to be ascribed, is not so generally agreed; in this men differ.

The opposers of the doctrines of grace attribute it, at least, in part, to that scheme of truths which we justly esteem the gospel of Christ; nor can they think there is any reason to expect, that moral virtue and practical religion will rise and gain ground among us, so long as this is the subject of our ministrations. "They spare not to charge the whole with a tendency to licentiousness, to open the door to libertinism, and give men a loose to live at pleasure, in all manner of impiety. Particularly the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ, imputed by God the Father, and received by faith, is branded with this infamous character. It is suggested, that if this doctrine is true, the law is made void, obedience to it becomes unnecessary, and good works are insignificant things; and that it can be of no other use than to discourage good men in the performance of duty, and to encourage bad men in a course of wickedness." To remove this charge and imputation is my view in reading these words unto you.

The design of the apostle, in this epistle, is to set in a full and clear light, the doctrine of justification; in which he first proves that all mankind, Jews and Gentiles, are sinners, are under sin, (Romans 3:9) the pollution, guilt and power of it; and so are arraigned, accused and convicted by the law, as transgressors; which law pronounces the whole world guilty before God, stops the mouth of every man, and puts all to silence; so that. they have nothing to say in vindication of themselves, or why judgment should not be given against them, and be executed on them: whence it must most clearly follow, That no man can be justified in the sight of God by the law, by the deeds of it, or by any obedience of sinful man unto it. The apostle goes on to shew, that the matter of justification, or that by which a sinner is justified, is the righteousness of God; (Romans 3: 21, 22) a righteousness in which Jehovah, Father, Son and Spirit, are concerned. God the Father sent his Son to work it out, and bring it in; he has approved and accepted of it, and graciously imputes it to all the elect. The Son of God is the author of it; who is our Immanuel, God with us, God in our nature, God and man in one Person, God over all, blessed for

ever. Hence it has that fulness, sufficiency, and virtue to justify all to whose account it is placed; which the righteousness of a mere creature could never do. The holy Spirit of God discovers this righteousness to a poor, sensible sinner, brings it near to him; sets it before him; works faith in him to lay hold upon it, and receive it, and pronounces him justified by it in the court of conscience. This righteousness, the apostle says, (Romans 3:21) is manifested without the law, that is, in the gospel; in which it is revealed from faith to faith; though it is witnessed, a testimony is bore to it, both by the law and the prophets; and that it is unto all, applied unto all, and upon all, put upon all as a robe of righteousness, even upon all that believe; for there is no difference; (Romans 3:22) that is among men, among Jews or Gentiles; no distinction made between righteous men and sinners, or between some, being greater, others lesser sinners; for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; (Romans 3:23) are through sin depraved, and are destitute of the glorious image of God, that rectitude and uprightness of nature, in which man was created; and therefore stand in need of the justifying righteousness of Christ, by which they must be justified, if at all. The same inspired writer proceeds to observe, that the impulsive and moving cause of justification, is the free grace of God, being justified freely by his grace. (Romans 3:24) Grace moved Jehovah, the Father, to resolve upon the justification of his elect. Grace set his thoughts at work; employed his infinite wisdom to find out a way whereby these, though they should fall into sin, might be just with God. Grace put him upon ordaining, calling, engaging, and sending his Son to fulfill all righteousness in their room and stead; and it was grace in him to accept of it, for and on the behalf of them; and to impute it to them, who, in themselves, were sinners and ungodly. The grace and love of the Son greatly appear in his voluntary engagement to be the surety and substitute of his people, in his readiness to do the will of God, in his cheerful coming down from heaven about this work, and in the gracious manner in which he wrought out and brought in an everlasting righteousness. The grace of the Spirit is abundantly manifest in the revelation and application of the justifying righteousness of Christ, to a poor, sinful, unworthy creature, and in bestowing faith as a free gift upon him, to apprehend and embrace it

as his own. The meritorious or procuring cause of justification, is placed in the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God, in his infinite wisdom, and of his free rich grace, hath set forth or fore-ordained, to be a propitiation, to satisfy divine justice, by being an expiatory sacrifice for sin, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, adds the apostle, at this time his righteousness, that he might be just; that is, appear to be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. (Romans 3:25, 26) So that by this wise and happy scheme, both the grace and justice of God wonderfully agree in the justification of a poor sinner, and are thereby greatly glorified. From the whole, the apostle deduces several inferences and conclusions; as that upon this scheme, there is no room nor reason for boasting in the creature; and asks, (Romans 3:27) "Where is boasting then? it is excluded; by what law? of works? nay, but by the law of faith; that is, the doctrine of faith, and particularly the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ's righteousness; also that a man is justified, or whoever is justified, is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law; that God is the God both of Jews and Gentiles; and that there is but one way and method he makes use of in justifying of either, and that is, by faith and through faith; phrases which are synonymous, and expressive of one and the same thing; and then, in the words of our text, removes an objection which he easily saw would be raised against the doctrine he had advanced, Do we then make void the law through faith?"

There were some who thought they did make void the law by the doctrine of faith: This was an objection common in the mouths of the Jews, and had been often leveled against the ministry of Christ and his apostles; and therefore the apostle Paul could be no stranger to it. Our Lord himself was traduced by the ignorant and ill-natured men of that generation in which he lived, as an Antinomian, both in doctrine and practice: as one in doctrine, which is evident, from those words of his in his own defence; Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. (Matthew 5:17) Whence it is clear, that some had entertained such thoughts of him, that he came to destroy the law, and imagined that he did make it null and void by his doctrine

and ministry: and that they charged him with being one in practice, is certain from the account he gives of their calumny and detraction when he says, The Son of man came eating and drinking; and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners; but wisdom is justified of her children. (Matthew 11:19) Now if they called the Master of the household so, it is no wonder that they of his household, his disciples and followers, should be treated in the same opprobrious manner. Accordingly, when Stephen, being filled with the holy Ghost, disputed with the Jews concerning the Messiah and the gospel-state, and they were not able to resist the wisdom and spirit by which he spake; they suborned, and set up false witnesses, who said and swore, that he ceased not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law. (Acts 6:13) When the apostle Paul returned unto Jerusalem, after he had travelled over a large part of the Gentile world, preaching the gospel of the grace of God with great success; James, a fellow-apostle, observed to him how many thousands of the Jews there were which believed in Jesus, and yet were all zealous of the law, and strenuous advocates for it; who had been informed that he had said many things among the Gentiles, contrary to Moses and his law, which were highly displeasing to them; and therefore he put him upon a method to conciliate himself to their affections; which method did not succeed according to desire and expectation: for the Jews having observed one Trophimus, an Ephesian, with him, whom they supposed he brought into the temple; they cried out, Men of Israel, help, this is the man that teacheth all men every where, against the people, and the law, and this place. (Acts 21:8) From all which it is most manifest, that the apostle must be fully acquainted with, and he aware of this popular objection to his doctrine; and which he here makes answer to; partly by way of detestation and abhorrence, God forbid; a way of speaking he often makes use of, when vile objections were made to his doctrine, or such wicked consequences drawn from it, as were abominable to him; as when he observes, What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid: How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein? (Romans 6:1, 2) Again What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid Nay, I had not known sin but by the law. (Romans 7:7) Once

more; If while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, Is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid : (Galatians 2:17) and partly he replies to this objection, by asserting the contrary, yea, we establish the law; in like manner as Christ had done before in a passage already referred to, I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill; and indeed, he is not destroying, but the fulfilling end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes. (Romans 10:4)

By faith here we are to understand either the grace or the doctrine of faith, or both. Faith may be considered as a grace; which by an inspired writer is defined to be the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen: (Hebrews 11:1) It is a grace peculiar to the chosen of God, and precious; it is a fruit and effect of electing love, and so an evidence of it; and is therefore styled The faith of God's elect. (Titus 1:1) It is a gift of God, (Ephesians 2:8) an instance of his grace; and a special blessing of the everlasting covenant; it is not obtained by the industry, power and will of man; it is implanted in the heart by the Spirit of God, and the power of his grace; whence it is said to be the faith of the operation of God. (Colossians 2:12) This grace has a considerable place and concern in the justification of a poor sinner before God, in the court of conscience. This is the eye of the soul, by which it sees and looks unto the righteousness of Christ for justification; for that in the gospel is revealed from faith to faith; (Romans 1:17) it is the hand of the soul, by which it receives the blessing from the Lord, even righteousness from the God of its salvation; (Psalm 24:5) or in other words, by which it receives abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness. (Romans 5:17) Hence such as are possessed of it, are said to be justified by it; not by it as an habit implanted in them by the Spirit of God; for, as such, it is a branch of sanctification; nor as an act performed by them; for as such, it is their act and deed, under the influence of the Spirit of God; but relatively, organically, or objectively considered; that is, as it relates to, and is concerned with, or has for its object Christ's righteousness; or as it is a means of apprehending and receiving that as its justifying one; for faith itself doth not make us righteous; it is not our righteousness, nor does it give us one; no, nor an interest in Christ's; but it is that grace by which we claim our interest in Christ's righteousness; by which

we have the knowledge and perception of it, and possess that spiritual peace, joy and pleasure which arise from it: it is that grace by which we live on Christ as the Lord our righteousness; who was delivered into the hands of justice and death for our offences; and was raised again for our justification. (Romans 4:25) Now faith considered as having such an hand in this affair, is no way contrary to the law of God; that is not made void by it; nor is obedience to it, on the account of faiths rendered unnecessary and insignificant, as will be shewn hereafter.

Again; By faith may be meant the doctrine of faith; and that either as it may intend in general the whole gospel, or in particular, the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ's righteousness. The whole gospel sometimes goes by the name of faith, and is called, The faith once delivered to the saints; our most holy faith; and the faith of the gospel; (Jude 3) because it contains things to be believed at once, upon the credit of the revealer, and not to be disputed by carnal reason: it proposes, and points out the great object of faith, Jesus Christ; its language is, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved: (Acts 14:31) it is the means, in the Spirit's hands, of begetting and implanting the grace of faith in the hearts of God's elect: Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. (Romans 10:7) Yea, the word preached is unprofitable, unless it be mixed with faith by them that hear it. (Hebrews 4:2) Now there is an entire harmony and consistency between this doctrine of faith and the law of God. The law is so far from being made void by it, that whatsoever is against that, is also contrary to sound doctrine, according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, committed to the trust of his servants. (1 Timothy 1:9-11) Moreover, since the apostle is manifestly insisting, in the context, upon the doctrine of a sinner's justification before God, it is reasonable to suppose, that this is what he principally designs by faith; and it is not to be wondered at, that this should be so called; since the grace of faith is of so much use in it, to the apprehension, knowledge and comfort of it and since it is so fundamental an article of faith, that he that goes off from it, is said to be removed unto another gospel; Christ is become of no effect unto him: and whosoever seeks to be justified by the law, is fallen from grace; (Galatians 1:4, 6) that is, from the doctrine of it. Now by this particular

doctrine also, the law is not made null and void; nor are good works, done in obedience to it, useless and unprofitable.

By the law, I apprehend, we are to understand not the ceremonial law, that law which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances imposed on them, the Jews, until the time of reformation; (Hebrews 9:1) that is, the gospel dispensation, or times of the Messiah; which law only had a shadow of good things to come, but not the very image of the things; and could never, by its daily or yearly sacrifices, make the comers thereunto perfect; (Hebrew 10:1) and therefore there was a disannulling of the commandment, for the weakness and unprofitableness of it. (Hebrews 7:18) This law is indeed made void and useless; Christ has broken down the middle wall of partition which stood between, separated and distinguished between Jew and Gentile; he has abolished in his flesh the enmity, that which was the cause of so much enmity between the people of Israel and the nations of the world, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; (Ephesians 2:14, 15) wherefore no man should now judge or condemn Christians in respect of meat or drink, or of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath-days, which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ; (Colossians 2:16, 17) he is the sum and substance of all these ceremonies: nor was this law abolished and made void until it was fulfilled in and by Christ; for every type and figure, every shadow and sacrifice, every office and ordinance pertaining to that dispensation, had their entire accomplishment in him. But by the law in this our text, I judge, the moral law is intended; that law which was written in Adam's heart in innocence; some remains of which are to be observed in fallen man, and even among the Gentiles, destitute of a divine revelation; and because of the depravity of human nature, and the treachery of human memory, and because this law was so much obliterated, and almost erased out of the hearts of men; a new edition of it was delivered to Moses in writing, calculated particularly for the people of the Jews; and which is opposed unto, and contradistinguished from the gospel of Christ; the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. (John 1:17) The sum of this law is love to God and to our neighbour; and is established by sanctions of rewards and

punishments, promising life in case of obedience, and threatening with death in case of disobedience.

Now to make void the law, according to the import of the word here used, is to destroy and abolish it, to render it idle, inactive, weak, useless, and insignificant; and to establish it, according to the notation of the word in the text, is to make it stand, to place it upon a sure basis and firm foundation, or to make it effectual to answer the ends and purposes for which it is designed.

Upon the whole, the observation on the text, or the doctrine of it, is this; that the moral law is not made null and void, but is established both by the grace and doctrine of faith. The proposition consists of two parts, a negative and an affirmative, I shall first consider the one, and then the other.

First, The negative part of the proposition is, That the law of God is not made void either by the grace or doctrine of faith.

1. Not by the grace of faith. It is certain, indeed, that believing and working, or faith and works, are continually opposed to, and contradistinguished from each other in the business of justification; every one that has read his Bible, with any care, will be able to observe this. How often does the apostle say, that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law; (Romans 3:28) and that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ? Even we, says he, have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. (Galatians 2:16) And again; To him that worketh not, but believeth, on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. (Romans 4:5) But then it should be known, that faith is not opposed to the doing of good works, in obedience to the law of God, from right principles, and with right views; but to trusting to, and depending upon them, and glorying in them, as the matter of justification before God, and acceptance with him; for that there is an entire agreement and consistency between faith in Christ, and works done in obedience to the law upon gospel principles, will clearly appear from the following hints. Let be observed then,

That that faith, only is right, which looks to and lays hold upon Christ's righteousness for justification, that is attended with good works, as fruits of righteousness;

for as the apostle James says, What doth it profit, my brethren. though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? Faith if it hath not works, is dead being alone: (James 2:14, 17) and such a faith can never be true and genuine, nor of any use and advantage; though good works do not, and cannot justify a man's person before God; yet they justify a man's faith or evidence the truth of it before men; they are fruits of faith, and so testimonies of the reality of it. A man may say, adds the same apostle, thou hast faith and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works (James 2:18) Yea, he further observes, that by works faith is made perfect; and that, as the body without the spirit is dead; so faith without works is dead also. Not that the essence, perfection, and life of faith lie in, or flow from works; but because, as one rightly judges, works are second acts, necessarily flowing from the life of faith; and faith is said to be perfected by them, not with an essential perfection, as the effect is perfected by the cause; but with a complemental one, as the cause is made perfect, or rendered actually complete in the production of the effect. Faith is not an idle, inactive, inoperative grace but a very industrious, active, and working one; it works by love to God and Christ, to fellow-Christians and fellow-creatures; and love, by which faith works, takes a large compass of operation; it is very extensive, both as to its objects and its acts. Hence that which is perfect, as it is in Christ, is the fulfilling of the law; and though love is imperfect in the saints, yet so far as it acts aright, it acts in agreement with the law; and therefore the law can never be made void by that faith which operates by it. Owe no man any thing, saith the apostle, but to love one another; for he that loveth another, hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery; Thou shalt not kill; Thou shalt not steal; Thou shalt not bear false Witness; Thou shalt not Covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying; namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. (Romans 8:8-10)

Again; As faith without works is dead; so, on the other hand, works without faith, are dead works also; yea, Whatsoever is not of faith is sin: (Romans 14:23) and without faith it is impossible to please God,

(Hebrews 11:6) or to perform any duty acceptable unto him. Hence the law, and obedience to it, can never be made void by this grace, and the exercise of it, or its concern in justification: since the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned? (1 Timothy 1:5)

Besides, believers, or such as have true faith in Christ and his righteousness, are the only persons that are capable of yielding spiritual obedience to the law, or of performing good works in a spiritual manner. Men may as soon expect to gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles, as to imagine that good works, such as are in all their circumstances so, can be performed by any evil man. Men must become the workmanship of God, and be created in Christ Jesus, in order to perform good works; which. God hath before ordained that we should walk in them; (Ephesians 2:10) they must be made new creatures, and put on the new man; which after God is created in, unto righteousness and true holiness; (Ephesians 4:24) and such as are born again, who have the Spirit of Christ within, them, the grace of Christ bestowed on them, and particularly, have the grace of faith, and that in exercise, are best qualified for doing works of real righteousness, and acts of true holiness: of all men in the world, such as have believed in Christ, as the Lord their righteousness and strength, ought to be careful to maintain good works for necessary uses; and these, indeed, are zealous of them, and are heartily desirous of performing more than they do, to testify their love to Christ, and to adorn his doctrine: which doctrine of grace teaches them, that denying ungodliness and worldly lust, they should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. (Titus 3:8 and 2: 11, 12)

Add to these things, that that faith which is concerned in a sinner's justification, looks to Christ as the end, the fulfilling end of the law for righteousness; it lays hold upon a righteousness which is every way commensurate to the Law of God; which answers all its demands, and gives it all it requires; a righteousness with which God is well pleased, justice is satisfied, and by which the law is magnified and made honourable; (Isaiah 42:21) a righteousness that is complete and perfect, pure and spotless; by which all the seed of Israel shall be justified, and in which they shall glory: wherefore that faith which spies this in Christ,

looks to him for it, and says, Surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength; (Isaiah 45:24, 25) can never be contrary to the law of God, or do any thing by which that is made void and useless.

2. Nor is the law made void by the doctrine of faith, particularly by the doctrine of justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ. Indeed, according to this doctrine, the law does not justify, nor can any man be justified by the deeds of it; the law neither has, nor can it have, any such use, since the fall of man; this makes the righteousness of another necessary, and justification to proceed on another foot; For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us. (Romans 8:34) Man, through sin is dead; and he must be made alive before he is capable of working righteousness, or of yielding obedience to the law: there must be life before there can be righteousness. Now if there had been a law which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law: (Galatians 3:21) but inasmuch as there never was any such law which could give life to a dead sinner, there can be no justification by it. The argument used by the apostle, is sufficient to give satisfaction to any one that has any regard to Christ or true Christianity; if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain; (Galatians 2:21) but though this use of the law is set aside by the doctrine of faith, yet all its real and proper uses continue untouched by it, and remain in full force; we know that the law is good if a man use it lawfully. (1 Timothy 1:8) There is a lawful and there is an unlawful use of the law; the unlawful use of the law is to seek for life, righteousness and salvation by it; the lawful uses of it, and which are not made void by the doctrine of faith, are such as these:

One use of the law is, to inform us of the mind and will of God; it is a transcript of his holy nature and unchangeable will; and therefore is itself holy just and good, (Romans 7:12) as it must needs be, since it comes from him; it teaches us what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God; it points out to us our duty both to God and man; what should be done or not done by us; it directs us to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, and strength; and to love our neighbour as ourselves; which, in a few words,

contain the sum and substance of it.

Another use of the law is, to convince of sin: for by the law is the knowledge of sin; (Romans 3:20) of sin original and actual, of the sin of our hearts and nature, as well as of the sin of our lips, lives and actions: I had not known sin, says the apostle but by the law: for I had not known lust, that is, known it to, be a sin, and sinful, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. (Romans 7:7) Not that the law can or does of itself, really and thoroughly, spiritually and savingly, convince of sin; for this is the work of the Spirit of God: but then the Spirit of God makes use of the law to work in men thorough convictions of their sinful, lost, and miserable condition by nature.

Again; Another use of the law, not made void by the doctrine of faith, is, to be as a glass to believers themselves; to behold therein by the light of the divine Spirit, the deformity of their souls by sin, and the imperfection of their obedience; whereby they grow out of love with themselves, and quit all dependence on their own righteousness for justification. So the apostle Paul, comparing himself, his heart and services, with the pure and holy law of God, thus expresses himself; We know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin. (Romans 7:14) In this view of things the psalmist David was able to make such an observation as this; I have seen an end of all perfection: thy commandment is exceeding broad; (Psalm 119:96) that is “ I see that the law of God is so large and broad, and my obedience to it so short of it, and so imperfect, that I despair of ever attaining perfection by the deeds of it.” It was, no doubt by the light of the Spirit, and as beholding herself in the glass of the law, that the church saw, and so said, that her righteousness was as filthy rags, and herself as an unclean thing. (Isaiah 64:6) Hence,

There is a farther use of the law to believers, and that is, to make the righteousness of Christ more dear and valuable to them for when they see how imperfect their own righteousness is, and how far short of the demands of the righteous law of God their obedience comes; and when they behold what an everlasting righteousness Christ has brought in; how perfect it is in itself, and how agreeable to the law; insomuch that it is not only fulfilled by it, but magnified and made honourable; they are at once delighted with it, fix upon it, and desire to be found in Christ not having

their own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ; the righteousness which is of God by faith. (Philippians 3:9)

Once more; Another use and office of the law is, that. it is a rule of life, that is, of action, walk and conversation to the saints; who are not without law to God, but under the law to Christ: (1 Corinthians 9:21) and as it in the hands of Christ, and held forth by him, as King of saints, and lawgiver in his church, it is to be observed and attended to by them; and as persons born again, being under the influences of the blessed Spirit, and having his gracious assistance, they delight in the law of God, after the inward man; and though with the flesh, they sometimes, to their great regret and sorrow, serve the law of sin; yet, at other times they are enabled cheerfully, and with the mind, to serve the law of God. (Romans 7: 22, 25)

To say no more; though God's justified ones, are as such, delivered from the wrath and condemnation of the law; Christ having redeemed them from thence by being made a curse for them; (Galatians 3:13) and having the sentence of condemnation executed upon him, which their sin deserved, so that there is now no condemnation to them that are in him; (Romans 8:1) they are passed from death to life, and shall never enter into condemnation: yet the law remains a cursing and damning law to others; it lies against Christless sinners; it pronounces them guilty, and accurses them; it says to them that are of the works of it, and are under it, Cursed is every one that continues not in all things which are written in the boo/c of the law to do them; (Galatians 3:10) yea, it is the killing letter, the ministration of condemnation and death unto them. Thus the law, as to these uses of it, both to saints and sinners, is not made void by the doctrine of faith.

Perhaps it will be asked, Is not the law, in some sense, destroyed and abolished? Does not the apostle say to believers, Ye are not under the law, but under grace? (Romans 6:14) Yea, he affirms that they are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; and that they are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein they were held. (Romans 7:4, 6) And elsewhere, (2 Corinthians 3:11) he argues from the former glory of the law, to the more excelling glory of the gospel, thus; If that which is done away, that is, the law, was glorious, much more that which remaineth,

that is, the everlasting gospel, is glorious. To which I answer,

That the law, as a covenant of works, is abolished, and done away; in this sense, it is made void to believers. Adam was a covenant head and representative of all his posterity, in which he was a figure of him that was to come; the law was given to him and to all mankind in him, promising life on condition of obedience, and threatening with death in case of transgression. Adam soon broke this covenant, whereby sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men! for in him all have sinned, (Romans 5:12, 14) God's elect themselves not excepted. These were considered in Adam, their natural and federal head; they sinned in him, and fell with him; the sentence of death passed on them as on others; the reason why it was not, and never will be executed upon them is, because Christ, in the everlasting covenant, became their surety and substitute: engaged to bear the punishment of their sins, and make satisfaction to the law and justice of God for them; which he has done by his sufferings and death; and so has delivered them from the law, as a covenant of works; and from all that misery, destruction and death, it entailed upon them wherefore they are not under the law, as a covenant of works, but under grace, the covenant of grace.

Again: The law is abolished and done away, as to the form of administration of it by Moses. The whole frame of the Mosaic economy is broke to pieces; which was signified by the two tables of stone being cast out of his hands and broken, when he came down from the mount; which were afterwards renewed, and put into the ark, a type of Christ; in whose hands, and not in the hands of Moses, is the law to be considered. The Jews said to the poor blind man, that was cured by Christ, Thou art his, that is, Christ's disciple; but we are Moses's disciples. (John 9:28) They valued themselves upon the latter; we Christians upon the former. Moses, indeed, was a faithful servant; but he was only a servant: Christ is a Son over his own house; and it is he that we are to hearken to. When Moses and Elias were with Christ on the mount, at the time of his transfiguration, a voice was heard, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him; (Matthew 17:5) not Moses and Elias, but hear the well-beloved Son.

Moreover, the law is destroyed as a yoke of bondage.

As it was a covenant of works, and as administered under the former dispensation, it tended to bondage, and induced a servile spirit on those that were under it. It was not. only a rigid schoolmaster, but a severe taskmaster; not only setting hard lessons, but requiring strict and perfect obedience, without giving any strength to perform, or directing where it is to be had; but now, in Christ's hands, it is a perfect law of liberty; (James 1:25) and such as are called by grace, are made a willing people in the day of Christ's power upon them; not only to be saved alone by him, but to yield a cheerful obedience to the law, as given forth by him. In this view of it, its commandments are not grievous; this yoke is easy, and this burden is light; the saints serve it with pleasure, not in the oldness of the letter, but in newness of spirit! (Romans 7:6)

Likewise, As has been already observed, the people of God are freed from the malediction of it, and condemnation by it, and so from the terror of it; it is a terrifying law, as it is a cursing and damning one; wherefore, to such, who desire to be under it, it may be said, what the apostle did, Do ye not hear the law? (Galatians 4:21) it speaks wrath and vengeance, cursing and bitterness: it is a voice of words, of terrible Words; which they that heard at mount Sinai in treated that the word should not be spoken to them any more; for they could not endure that which was commanded. But now the case is different with us under the gospel-dispensation; the scene is altered; the face of things is changed; we hear a different voice; love, grace and mercy, instead of wrath and vengeance: blessing and salvation, in the room of cursing and condemnation: we are not come unto the mount that might he touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest; but we are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem; and to an innumerable company of angels; to the general assembly, and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven; and to God the judge of all; and to the spirits of just men made perfect; and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. (Hebrews 12:18-20, 22-24)

Once more; The law is abrogated and made void, with respect to justification. We are not to seek for, and expect life and righteousness by obedience to it; and should we, our seeking would be in vain,

and our expectation would be disappointed. Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? because they sought it not by faith but as it were by the works of the law. (Romans 9:31, 32) The same success attends all those who pursue the same scheme; by which they discover their ignorance, vanity and pride; their ignorance of the strictness of the justice of God; their vain opinion and conceit of their own righteousness; and their haughty and contemptuous rejection of the righteousness of Christ; all which is expressed in these few words; For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish a righteousness of their own, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. (Romans 10:3) This is to act contrary to God's declared way and method of justifying sinners. There can be no justification by the deeds of the law; this use of the law is entirely abolished; we are not to obey it with any such view, or for such a purpose; no, we are to yield obedience to it, as in the hands of Christ from a principle of love to him; and to express our gratitude for the numerous mercies we receive from him, and through him; and to testify our professed subjection, and our sense of obligation to him.

But now, though the law is made void as a covenant of works, it still continues a rule of action, walk and conversation; though it is done away as to the form of the administration of it by Moses, the matter, the sum and substance of it remains firm, unalterable, and unchangeable in the hands of Christ; though it is destroyed as a yoke of bondage, it is in being as a perfect law of liberty; and though believers are delivered from the curse and condemnation of it, they are not exempted from obedience to it; and though they are not to seek for justification by it, they are under the greatest obligations, by the strongest ties of love, to have a regard to all its commands. So much for the negative part of the proposition. I proceed,

Secondly, To consider the affirmative, and to shew that the law is established by the grace and doctrine of faith.

The perpetuity of the law is maintained hereby. The race of faith always views the law in the hands of Christ, looks to him as the fulfilling end of it, and is attended with works done in obedience to it. According to the doctrine of justification by faith in

the righteousness of Christ, all the precepts of the law are fulfilled, its penalty endured, and itself continued as a rule of righteousness. The Law, upon the gospel-scheme, is as unchangeable, and more so than the laws of the Medes and Persians; not one jot or tittle of it has passed away, nor shall ever pass away; for all is fulfilled, and will be preserved.

The spirituality of the law is asserted and secured upon the foot of faith, and the doctrine of it. The Pharisees of old, as much as in them lay, made void the law, as to the spirituality of it, at the same time they pretended to be advocates for it; by insinuating as though the law only regarded the external actions of life, and was not concerned about the secret motions, inward thoughts and lusts of the heart: whereas, such as have believed in Christ, and understand his gospel, have other notions of the law; and know that it is spiritual. (Romans 7:14) A true believer, in the exercise of the grace of faith, beholds the inward corruption of his heart and nature; and mourns over it, as contrary to the pure and holy law of God; and at the same time, according to the doctrine of faith, with pleasure views, that he is justified by the blood of Christ, even by that blood which cleanseth from all sin, (Romans 5:9; 1 John 1:7) of heart, lip, and life.

The perfect righteousness of the law is established by faith, and the doctrine of it. Whatever the law requires, according to this doctrine is given it. Does it require pure and spotless holiness of nature? There is in Christ an entire conformity to it in this respect; who is holy, harmless, and undefiled; and as such, is an high priest that becomes us, is suitable to us, as being our sanctification and our righteousness. Does the law require sinless and perfect obedience to all its commands? Christ has always done the things that pleased his Father, and done all things that are pleasing to him; he has perfectly obeyed the whole preceptive part of the law. Does the law require of, and threaten transgressors with the penalty of death? Christ being made sin, was made a curse for his people, and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross. So that the law, in all respects, is magnified, and made honourable by him, according to the doctrine of faith. We bring to the law in Christ our head, or rather he in our room and stead, a righteousness which answers all the demands of it, and casts a lustre and glory upon it and indeed, all the obedience of

angels and men put together, does not, and cannot give the law such glory and honour as the obedience and righteousness of Christ does. Whence it is clear, that the law is so far from being made void, that it is thoroughly established by it.

Obedience to the law by believers, is enforced upon them by the best of motives, and yielded to it by them, under the best of influences; it is enforced on gospel motives and principles. Read over the epistles of the apostle Paul, particularly those to the Ephesians and Colossians, and you will easily see how the saints are exhorted to all the duties of life, incumbent on them in their families, the churches, and the world; and are encouraged to a performance of them upon the principles of grace, and by the doctrines of it; and according to the covenant of grace, they have the best assistance promised, provided and afforded to them. I will put my law in their inward parts, says the Lord, (Jeremiah 31:33) and I will write it in their hearts. And again; I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes; and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

Once more; By the doctrine of faith we establish the law, or make it stand; because we place it in the best of hands, and upon the surest foundation. The law was put into the hands of Adam; but it did not long continue there; it was quickly transgressed and broken. The two tables of stone, with the law written on them, were put into Moses's hands; but he, as he came down from the mount, cast them out of his hands, and broke them to pieces beneath it: but now the law, according to the doctrine of faith, is put into the hands of Christ; and there it stands, and will stand firm and sure to all generations; yea, it will stand unchangeable and unalterable to all eternity. We say, The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King, and he will save us. (Isaiah 38:22)

In this view of the law, how amiable and lovely must it look in the eyes of saints; they cannot but delight in it, as satisfied by Christ, and take pleasure in obeying it, as it is in his hands; the language of their souls is that of David's O how I love thy law! it is my meditation all the day. (Psalm 119:97) And as there is a pleasure attends an observance of it, there is peace in it; though it doth not arise from it, nor is founded on it: Great peace have they which love thy law, and nothing shall offend them. (Psalm 119:165) Such as are believers in

Christ, ought not only to be careful to maintain, but even to excel, to go before others in good works. Let us therefore, by divine assistance, shew by our lives and conversations, the truth of this doctrine, that "the law is not made void, but established by the gospel." Let us, as it is the will of God we should, with well-doing pat to silence the ignorance of foolish men; and shame them who falsely accuse our good conversation in Christ. Let us make it appear, throughout the whole of our conduct, under the gracious influences of the Spirit of God, that we have a proper regard to the unchangeable law of God, as to the everlasting gospel of Christ Jesus.

9 The Law In The Hand Of Christ

A Sermon,

Preached May 24, 1761, at Broad-Mead, in Bristol.

DEUTERONOMY 10:5

And I turned myself and came down from the mount, and put the tables in the ark which I had

made; and there they be, as the Lord commanded me.

MOSES being called up to mount Sinai, the Lord delivered to him two tables of stone, with the writing of the law upon them; when he descended from thence, perceiving that the children of Israel had sinned, by making and worshipping the golden calf, in great indignation at it, he cast them out of his hands, and broke them at the bottom of the mount: for this sin wrath came upon the people, and many of them fell by the sword of the sons of Levi; upon which Moses had compassion on them, and entreated the Lord for them; who promised to make his goodness before him, and proclaim his name gracious and merciful; and ordered him to hew two tables of stone like the first, and come up into the mount, and bring them with him, and he would write upon them the same words which were on the first; and also directed him to make an ark of shittim wood to put them in; all which he did: for having hewed two tables of stone, he carried them up to God in the mount, who wrote on them the ten commandments, according to the first writing, and gave them to Moses; who having received them, turned himself, as our text says, from the place where the divine Majesty was; and came down from the mount, from mount Sinai, with the two tables in his hands, and the writing of God on them, one table

in one hand, and the other in the other hand; and put the tables in the ark which he had made, or ordered to be made by Bezaleel; for it was the same with that he made, and not a temporary one made for the present purpose till that was finished: and there they be as the Lord commanded we; there the two tables were when Moses rehearsed what is contained in this book on the plains of Moab, which was about eight and thirty years after the delivery and renewal of the tables on mount Sinai; and here they were in Solomon's time, when the ark was brought into the temple built by him; and when, as it is said, there was nothing in it, save the two tables of stone which Moses put there at Horeb; (1 Kings 8) and here they continued as long as the ark was in being. In discoursing on these words, and in order to improve them to some spiritual purposes, I shall consider,

I. The ark Moses made, into which the tables were put, as a type of Christ.

II. What was put into the ark, the two tables of stone on which the law was written.

III. What the putting of the tables into the ark signified; and,

IV. The continuance of them there; there they be as the Lord commanded me.

I. The ark may be considered as a type of Christ, both with respect to the names and epithets given unto it, and with respect to the matter of which it was made.

First, There is an agreement between that and Christ, in the names and titles by which it is called; its general name is an ark or chest, such an one in which men put their wealth and riches, their gold and silver, their jewels and precious stones, and whatsoever is of worth and value: in Christ are put and hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, all the riches of grace and glory besides the fullness of the Godhead which dwells bodily in him, it has pleased the Father that all fullness of grace should dwell in him, for the supply of the wants of his people in all ages of time; he is full of grace and full of truth; there is a fullness of justifying grace and righteousness in him, a fullness of pardoning grace, a fullness of sanctifying and persevering grace; and from him and by him does the Lord supply the need of his people, according to his riches in glory, or glorious riches which are in him.

The ark is sometimes called the ark of God, (1 Sam.

4, 11, 13, 17, 19, 21, 22) being made by his order and direction, and for his service and worship, and was his property: Christ, as a divine person, is the Son of God, his own Son, his proper Son; as mediator, he was set up, constituted, and invested with this office, by him; as man, he prepared a body for him in council and covenant, and in time actually formed the human nature, and filled and adorned it with the gifts and graces of his Spirit. Sometimes it goes by the name of the ark of his strength, Arise, O Lord God, into thy resting-place; thou, and the ark of thy strength. (2 Chron. 6:41) Christ is both the mighty God and the mighty man, the man of God's right hand, whom he has made strong for himself and for his people; in whom there is not only righteousness, but strength for them, to enable them to exercise every grace, to bear up under every affliction, to withstand every temptation, to oppose every sin, and to perform every duty of religion; for though they can do nothing of themselves, yet they can do all things through the strength of Christ communicated to them. The ark is also called the ark of the covenant, (Heb. 9:4) because the law or testimony, which sometimes has the name of a covenant, was put into it: and not only the law has been fulfilled in Christ, but the covenant of grace was made with him, as the head and representative of his people, and is kept and stands fast with him; he is the surety, mediator, and messenger of it, yea, the covenant itself; he is the sum and substance of it; all the blessings of it are in his hands, and all the promises of it are yea and amen in him. The ark has the epithet of holy given to it; Josiah ordered the Levites to put the holy ark into the temple built by Solomon: (2 Chron. 35:3) Christ is the holy one of God, holy in his divine nature, glorious in the perfection of his holiness, and is such as is not to be found in creatures, angels, or men there is none holy as he is; the seraphim cover their faces when they celebrate this perfection of his; he is holy in his human nature, that is the holy thing born of the virgin, without the spot and blemish of original sin; he was holy and harmless in his life and conversation here on earth, did no sin, nor was conscious of any; and he is the fountain and source of all holiness to his people; and is of God made unto them sanctification, as well as wisdom, righteousness, and redemption; to all which may be added, that the ark is called the glory of God, the face of God, and

Jehovah himself; (Ps. 78:61 and 105:4; Num. 10:35, 36) being a symbol of his presence: Christ is the brightness his Father's glory, the angel of his presence, and Jehovah our righteousness.

Secondly, The ark may be considered as a type of Christ, with respect to the matter of which it was made; it was made of wood, even of shittim wood, and that covered with gold: it being of wood, may denote the meanness of Christ in the human nature; when he was found in fashion as a man; in his state of humiliation, he appeared in the form of a servant, and was of no reputation among men, emptied himself, as it were, and seemed as if he was stripped of the glories of Deity, which were hid under the coarse veil of humanity; he took upon him all our sinless infirmities, was in all things made like unto us, excepting sin; hence he was disesteemed of by men, despised and rejected by them, yea rejected from being a man; was scarcely allowed the name of a man; and was reckoned a worm, and no man. It being Shittim wood of which the ark was made, and which was incorruptible and durable, may signify the incorruption of Christ, even in the human nature; for though he was crucified through weakness, died the death of the cross, and was laid in the grave, yet he was not left there so long as to see corruption; though he was dead, he was soon raised from the dead, and now lives for evermore. Melchizedek was an eminent type of Christ, he having neither beginning of days, as God, nor end of life now as man; and having an unchangeable priesthood, (Heb. 7:2, 24, 25) which does not pass from one to another, and in which there is no succession. Christ is durable, even everlasting in his person, offices, grace, and fullness, and in the efficacy of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice. The wood of which the ark was made, being covered with gold, and having a crown of gold on it, may point at Christ, whose head, the principal nature in him, is as the most fine gold; and who as mediator has a crown of pure gold set on his head by his divine Father, and whom we now see by faith crowned with glory and honour in the human nature in heaven. It may be expressive of the richness of Christ as man and mediator, whose riches of grace and glory are unsearchable; and of the worth and value believers in him put upon him, and of the high esteem he is had in by them, and how exceeding precious he is to them.

There are one or two things more, which though not reducible to either of the above heads, yet are worthy of notice; as that the ark was portable, and might be carried on occasion from place to place, as it sometimes was; for which purpose it had rings at the four corners of it, two on each side of it, and staves provided to put into those rings: and which also were made of Shittim wood covered with gold, and were emblems of the ministry of the word, and of the ministers of it who, though mean in themselves, are adorned and enriched with the gifts and graces of the Spirit of God, and have the rich treasure of the gospel put into their earthen vessels; and are chosen vessels, as the apostle Paul was, to hear the name and gospel of Christ in the world, and carry it about from place to place; so the disciples of Christ carried it through all the cities of Israel, and from Judea into the Gentile world, and through the several parts of it; and it was brought from the eastern into the western parts of the world, and at length to these northern isles of our. Moreover, let it be observed, that there was but one ark. Some Jewish writers think there were two arks; one that Bezaleel made, and this made by Moses; the one had the tables in it, and the other went out to battle on occasion: but for this there is no foundation. There was but one ark, and so there is but one Son of God, the only begotten of the Father; one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; one Saviour and Redeemer; the same today, yesterday, and for ever; there is none besides him; there is no other name given under heaven among men whereby they must be saved. In this ark is salvation, and no where else.

II. I shall next consider what were put into the ark, two tables of stone, with the Law written upon them by the Lord himself; and may inquire into the matter, number, writing, and form of them.

1st, The matter of them; they were of stone; of what stone is not said, nor is it of any great avail to know what it was. Some Jewish writers will have them, at least the first tables, to be of the sapphire stone, which is not probable; and what they ground it upon is not sufficient to support it, namely, Exod. 24:10 where the elders of Israel are said to see the God of Israel; and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone: it is more probable these tables were marble slabs, since there was a great quantity of marble

in those parts; and the rock at Sinai was a marble rock; granite marble of a reddish color, as appears at this day; and one of the paraphrasest expressly calls them two marble tables however, it is certain they were tables of stone, to which the apostle opposes the fleshly tables of the heart. (2 Cor. 3:3) Now their being of stone may denote either,

1. The hardness of the heart of man, which is called a stony heart, (Ezek. 36:26) and is as hard as a piece of the nether millstone; as hard as the adamant stone, which is the hardest of all stones: it is obdurate and obstinate, inflexible, and not subject to the law of God; nor can it be, without the powerful and efficacious grace of God is exerted on it, and makes it pliable, and bends it to it: without this men live and die in the hardness of their hearts, and after their hard and impenitent heart treasure up wrath against the day of wrath, and righteous judgment of God. Or rather these tables being of stone denote

2. The firmness, stability, and duration of the law, which is invariable, unalterable, unchangeable, and eternal: Concerning thy testimonies, says David, I have known of old, that thou hast founded them for ever; (Ps. 119:152) they were made to continue for ever; and they do, and will continue for ever, even as long as there is any use for them in the world; they are more unalterable and unchangeable than the laws of the Medes and Persians. The law is not destroyed by Christ., but. fulfilled by him; not a jot or tilde of it has failed, but all has been fulfilled: and whoever breaks, or teaches men to break, the least of the commandments of it, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven, be reprov'd and chastised, if not punished for it. This must be understood, not with respect to the ministry of the law by Moses; as such as it has ceased, and the cessation of it as a ministry of his, was signified by the casting the tables out of his hands, and the breaking of them. The law was given by Moses, and as it was a ministration of his, it concerned the Jews only; it was given to him for them, and it was given by him to them, and to them only; and ceased as such when their church and civil state were at an end, and the gospel-dispensation took place; when grace and truth, the doctrine of grace and truth, came by Jesus Christ: (John 1:17) the law and the prophets, as ministered by Moses, and them, were until John, the forerunner of Christ, and Christ himself came, and ministered,

and held forth both law and gospel in a different manner; wherefore, when Moses the giver of the law, and Elias the chief of the prophets, were with Christ when transfigured on the mount, a voice came from the excellent glory, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye HIM; (Matt. 17:5) not Moses nor Elias, but HIM, and HIM only. Moses was the lawgiver to the Jews, but Christ is the lawgiver to us Christians. The Jews boasted that they were the disciples of Moses, but our greatest glory is, that we are the disciples of Jesus: when we say, therefore, that the law is immutable and unalterable, it must be understood not of the ministry of it, but of the matter of it, and that as moral; for whatsoever of a ceremonial kind may be thought to be in it, there is a disannulling of that, because of the weakness and unprofitableness of it; but whatever is of a moral nature in both tables, is unchangeable and eternal; whatever was holy, just, and good, under the former dispensation, or in ages past, is so now. The first table of the law concerns the worship of the one true and living God, and the reverence that is due to his name; and though the time and place of worship, and the outward forms and rites of it are alterable things, yet worship itself, as it is of a moral and spiritual nature, and consists of acts of devotion to God, of prayer to him and praises of him, and lies in acts of faith in him, fear of him, and a reverential affection for him, and obedience to him, is the same in all ages, unchangeable and unalterable. The second table of the law respects our neighbors, and our conduct towards them; and whatever was injurious to their characters, persons and properties in former times, is so still, and ever will be, and to be carefully avoided; and particularly the firmness, the constancy, stability, and durableness of the law, are to be understood of it, as it is in the hands of Christ, the king and lawgiver in his house, where it abides firm and sure, unalterably fixed, and is held forth by him as a rule of walk to his people under the gospel-dispensation; so that they are not without law to God, but under the law to Christ. (1 Cor. 9:21)

2dly, The number of these tables deserves some notice, which are two, as containing the distinct duties which are owing both to God and man. Our Lord accordingly has reduced the several commandments on them to two general comprehensive ones, in answer to the question put by the scribe, Which is

the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind: This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. (Matt. 22:36-40) Moreover to these two tables answer the tables of the heart and mind, on which the law is re-inscribed in regeneration and conversion: according to the promise in the covenant of grace, I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; (Heb. 8:10) and though the mind and heart are in effect the same, yet they are distinctly mentioned, and as it should seem with reference to the two tables of the law; and the apostle, when he puts in contrast the tables of stone on which the law was written, and the fleshly tables of the heart on which the epistle of Christ is written, uses the plural number. (2 Cor. 3:3)

3dly, The writing on them, what it was, and whose it was; what was written on the tables, were the Decalogue or the ten words; the same which the Lord spoke with an audible voice on mount Sinai, in the hearing of the children of Israel; the same he wrote on two tables of stone, plainly and legibly, that they might be easily read, and that even he that ran might read them, and that they might remain and be read in after ages; for *littera scripta manet*; and that they might remain unalterable, as Pilate said, concerning the inscription he put on the cross of Christ, What I have written, I have written; (John 19:22) signifying that it should continue as it was, and not be altered; so what God has written, he has written, and it shall remain so without any alteration and this writing, both on the former tables and on these latter tables, were the Lord's own writing, written by the finger of God himself; Moses wrote nothing, he only brought the two tables hewed, but quite empty and destitute of any thing on them; what was written was by the Lord himself: so the re-inscription of them on the hearts of men in regeneration is the Lord's own work, according to his promise; they are the epistle of Christ, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; (2 Cor. 3:3) it is not men nor ministers that inscribe these things on the fleshly tables of the heart, but the Lord himself; it is not by might or power of man, but by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts: and what was written on

these renewed tables of stone, was exactly the same that was written on the former; the same laws in the same words and in the same letters. The law of God is the same, let it

be where and when it will: the same law as moral was written on the heart of Adam in innocence: and the remains of the same law are to be observed by the Gentiles, since then do by nature the things contained in the law, which shew the work of the law written in their hearts: (Rom. 2:14, 15) and the same is written again by the Spirit of God in the hearts of his people in conversion; and it is the same law which was in the heart of Christ, and he became subject to, and is the fulfilling end of, for righteousness to those that believe in him.

4thly, The form of them; they were slabs of marble, hewed and formed into tables by Moses; but the matter of them was still the same they were tables of stone, denoting the same things as before, and which have been observed; and the hewing of them by Moses may denote the greater polishing of the law, or the brighter edition of it by him; it is but a rough draught of it, which is found written on the hearts of the Gentiles; but the law as delivered to Moses and given forth by him, was such as no nation under the sun had, besides the Israelites; What nation is there so great, says Moses, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous, as all this law which I set before you this day? (Deut. 4:8) The Psalmist David likewise takes notice of the distinguishing kindness of God to Israel, in giving them his word, statutes, and judgments, which he did not to others and for which therefore they had reason to praise the Lord, and which he thus expresses: He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation; and as for his judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the Lord. (Ps. 147:19, 20) And the apostle Paul enumerating the peculiar privileges of the children of Israel, reckons among them the giving of the law, and the service of God; (Rom. 9:4) in the enjoyment of which they had the advantage and the preference to the nations of the world.

III. I proceed to shew what the putting the tables into the ark signified. And this denotes,

1st, The being of the law in the heart of Christ, of which he himself says to his God and father, Thy law

is within my heart; (Ps. 40:8) where it was in a much higher sense than it was in the hearts of the Gentiles, who by nature do the things in it; or than it was in heart of Adam in his innocent state or than it is in the heart of a regenerate man. And its being in his heart, is expressive of the perfect knowledge he has of it: as a divine person, he is omniscient and knows all things, as mediator; the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in him; and the spirit of wisdom and understanding, of counsel and knowledge rest upon him; as man, he was filled with wisdom, and increased in it; and as he spoke such words of wisdom and grace as never man did, being full of doctrines of grace and truth, so he had such knowledge of the law as never man had. This appears from his ready answer to the scribe, which he delivered in so full and concise a manner, when he questioned him about which was the greatest commandment in the law, before observed. It denotes also his strong and cordial affection for it. David describes a good man, and some think the Messiah, as one whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night: (Ps. 1:2) and of himself, and from his own experience, he could say, O how love I thy law, it is my meditation all the day; (Ps. 109:97) in which, as in other things, he was a type of Christ: and if every man that is born again delights in the law of God after the inward man, and takes pleasure in obedience to it, much more must Christ, whose meat and drink it was to do the will of him that sent him; (John 4:34) one part of which was to obey and fulfill the law of God. Yea this includes and supposes complete conformity of heart and nature, of life and conversation in Christ unto it. There is a most perfect agreement between him and that. Is that holy? so was he in heart and life, Is that just? he is Jesus Christ the righteous. Is that good? he is good, and did good, and went about constantly doing good. Does the law require a holy nature perfectly free from sin? It is to be found in Christ, who is holy, harmless, and undefiled, and separate from sinners; free from the spot of original sin, and from any blemish of actual transgression. Does it demand and insist on sinless obedience? This is to be met with in none of Adam's race, only in Christ, who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.

2dly, The putting the two tables of the law into the ark, signifies Christ's subjection to the law, which was

not only in him, but he was under that. As a Jew, he was under the civil law: a Jew he was by birth; the Shiloh that was to come, and did come from the tribe of Judah; from which tribe the whole body of the nation were denominated Jews. He was of the family of David, which was of that tribe. He was born at Bethlehem Ephratah, or Bethlehem of Judah: so that as the apostle says, it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah; (Heb. 7:14) and was a native of that land, and strictly and properly a Jew; and as such was subject to the laws of his country; and even when it was reduced to a Roman province, and obliged to pay tribute to the Roman governors, and which he did not refuse to do; for as he taught men to give to Cæsar the things which were Cæsar's, he did the same himself, and even wrought a miracle to perform it: for when the receivers of tribute came to Peter for it, he ordered him to cast his hook into the sea, and out of the first fish that came up, to take a piece of money, and pay the tribute for him and himself; so far was he from being chargeable with the imputation laid upon him, that he was an enemy to Cæsar, a stirrer up of sedition, a perverter of the nation, and forbade the people to give tribute to Cæsar. As he was a son of Abraham, he was under the ceremonial law, and subject to that; so he was throughout the whole course of his life: he was circumcised the eighth day, presented by his parents to the Lord in the temple at the proper time, and went up to Jerusalem with them to keep the pass-over, when but twelve years of age; we often hear of him at the Jewish festivals in their synagogues and temple, attending the service of them; and one of the last actions of his life was keeping the pass-over with his disciples before he suffered. The ceremonies of the law were shadows of him, of which he was the body and substance, and had their accomplishment in him. As a creature, as a man, he was under the moral law, and subject to that, as every man is and ought to be: being made of a woman, or born of one, he was in course made under the law; and being found in fashion as a man, he was in the form of a servant, and under obligation to do duty and service, to fear God and keep his commandments, which is the whole duty of man, (Eccles. 7:13) or the duty of every man: especially he was under this law, and obliged to obey it, as he was the surety of his people. That he became their surety is certain; hence he is called the surety of a better

testament: (Heb. 7:22) he engaged in the covenant of grace, which is the better testament, to be the bondsman of his people, to pay their debts for them, to satisfy divine justice, to redeem and save them, to bring them back, and restore them, and set them before his divine Father; all which could not be done without fulfilling the law. This was a principal part of the will of God, which he agreed to do, saying, Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, such as were of a ceremonial kind, they being insufficient to atone for sin, and take it away; but the sacrifice of himself, body and soul, he did desire, which was typified by the sin-offerings and burnt-offerings under the law; Then said I, Lo I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me; I delight to do thy will, O my God; (Ps. 40:6-8) which was to offer himself a victim to divine justice, and be subject both to the precepts and penalty of the law, which as a surety for sinners he was obliged to be, and was: he was subject to the precepts of the law, and strictly observed them; he did always the things which pleased his Father, and all things that were pleasing to him, even his whole will and pleasure, and omitted nothing which he commanded and required; by which means he was fit to be a sacrifice for sin, since in him was no sin: he was not guilty of any breach of the law, in thought, word, or deed, and hereby became a proper pattern and example for his people to copy after; for though they are not able perfectly to conform to him as such, yet he is worthy of their imitation in all they can and it becomes them to walk even as he walked, (1 John 2:6) though they can only do it in an imperfect manner: and besides the precepts of the law, as the sinner's surety, he was subject to the penalty of it; for though, as a mere creature, and a sinless man, he was only bound to keep the commands of the law; yet as a surety for sinners he was obliged to bear the penalty of it in their room and stead, which they through disobedience to the law were liable to, which penalty is death, In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die; (Gen. 2:17) which is not only true of the first sin of man, but of every other, for the wages of sin is death; (Rom. 7:23) not death corporal only, but death eternal, or the wrath of God, which comes upon the children of disobedience, even on every one that has no share in the suretiship of Christ; but for whomsoever he became a surety, for them he became obedient unto death, and bore the curse of the law and

wrath of God, and thereby delivered them from it.

3d/y, The putting the tables into the ark, signified Christ's fulfillment of the law in the room and instead of his people. He not only had it in him, and was made under it, but he perfectly fulfilled it. This it became him to do as a surety; it became him indeed to fulfill all righteousness, civil, ceremonial, and moral, but especially the latter; since his work and business was, as a surety, to bring in everlasting righteousness for the justification of his people, and thereby justly and truly merit and claim the character of the Lord our righteousness. He came into the world in our nature, to fulfill the moral law and righteousness of it: Think not, says he, that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. (Matt. 5:17) Some of the Jews thought that Christ was an Antinomian, as these words plainly shew; just as some ignorant persons now reckon the faithful ministers of the gospel to be: and if our Lord himself was so ill thought of, it need not seem strange that his faithful followers should have each a brand of infamy fastened upon them: but certain it is, that Christ came not with such an intent, nor did he do anything in doctrine or practice which tended to destroy the law, but every thing which served to fulfill it; being sent in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, (Rom. 8:3, 4) as represented by him. And this is done, and effectually done; he is become the end of the law, the fulfilling end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. (Rom. 10:4) This is completely done; it is finished, and was finished when he died the death of the cross: and hereby the law is magnified, and made honourable; (Isai. 42:21) more so by the obedience and sufferings of the Son of God, than by the obedience of angels in heaven, or of Adam in paradise, or by the sufferings of the damned in hell to all eternity; the obedience and sufferings of these being that of creatures, whereas the righteousness that Christ has brought in and yielded to the law, is the righteousness of God; not only what is approved of by God, and accepted with him, and imputed by him to his people, but is what was wrought by him, who is God as well as man: and though his suffering the penalty of the law was in the human nature, yet in that nature as in union with the Son of God: whence the law has had such a glory put upon it, and an honour done it, it

never otherwise could have had; wherefore we should look not to our own righteousness as justifying, which is but filthy rags, but to the righteousness of Christ, which he is the author of, and is in him; and who was made sin for his people, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him. (2 Cor. 5:21)

IV. The last thing to be considered is, the continuance of the tables in the ark; which remained there until the time that Moses was about to die, even many years after they had been put there; and they remained there many ages after that; and which may signify the abiding of the law in the hands of Christ, the anti-type of the ark, even under the gospel-dispensation; the typical ark, and the tables in it, being no more, having their full accomplishment in Christ.

1st, Let it be observed that there is a sense in which the law is abolished, and continues not; the law and gospel are set in a contrast by the apostle; the one is said to be done away, and the other that which remaineth; (2 Cor. 3:11) which is the everlasting gospel, the word of God that abides for ever. When the law is in a sense said to become dead, and believers in Christ dead to that, and delivered from it; (Ro. 7:4, 6) this must be understood of it as a covenant of works; as such it was made with Adam, the federal head of all his posterity, in which he was a figure and type of the Messiah that was to come, the covenant-head of his spiritual offspring. This covenant Adam broke, and all his posterity in him; and so he conveyed sin and death to them, from which there is no deliverance but by Christ the second Adam: and he has redeemed his people that were under the law, and subject to the curse and condemnation of it, from it, as a covenant of works, entailing death and damnation on them so that they are not under the law as a covenant of works, but under grace, (Rom. 6:14) the covenant of grace; even as they are not under the law of sin as a reigning principle in them, but under grace as a governing one.

Likewise the law remains not as a yoke of bondage: it gendered, indeed unto bondage, and brought a spirit of bondage on them that were under it; but Christ has made his people free from it, and called them to liberty; and they are bid to stand fast in the liberty with which he has made them free, and not be in tangled again with the yoke of bondage. And indeed the law itself, as in the hands of Christ, is a law of liberty, and which his people serve cheerfully and voluntarily,

being made willing in the day of Christ's power upon them; not only to embrace his gospel, and submit to his ordinances, but to serve the law of God with their whole mind and spirit. The commandments of it are not grievous and heavy, being assisted by the Spirit and grace of God to obey them from right principles, and from right views; not to obtain life, but from a principle of life and grace implanted in them; so that this burden, if it may be called one, is light and easy, and borne with delight and pleasure.

The law remains not as a terrifying law; it was attended with terror when delivered on mount Sinai; it was a fiery law to the Israelites, when they heard it spoken out of the midst of fire, and saw the lightnings, and heard the thunder that accompanied it, it made them tremble, and even Moses himself exceedingly feared and quaked; and when it comes into a sinner's conscience, it works wrath, and leaves a fearful looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation. It is dreadful to them that are under it; hence, says the apostle, Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? (Gal. 4:21) its dreadful menaces and curses? But the believer in Christ has nothing to fear from the terrors of the law and its threatenings, for he is delivered from the curse and condemnation of it by Christ; and though it thunders out terrible volleys of curses on such who are of the works of it, and are under it, and continue not in all things written in it to do them, yet none of these can reach to or fall on the believer in Christ; for Christ has redeemed him from the curse of the law, being made a curse for him: nor is there any condemnation, not one condemnation, (Rom. 8:1) were there as many sentences of condemnation pronounced as sins committed, not one of them that can be executed on them that are in Christ, who are secured in his person, and redeemed by his blood; since he has been condemned: for them, and sin has been condemned in his flesh, when he suffered and died for them; and therefore who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died; (Rom. 8:33) whose death is a security from all condemnation by sin, Satan, the world, or by their own hearts and consciences. They that believe in Christ are passed from death to life, and shall never enter into condemnation; and therefore, however the law may be a cursing and damning law to others, it remains not so to them.

Moreover it remains not, and is not to be sought unto for justification; for by the deeds of it there shall no flesh, or any man, be justified in the sight of God; but a man, and every man that is justified in a gospel sense, is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law; (Ro. 3:20, 28) and it is a vain and fruitless thing to seek for righteousness by it. The Jews who followed after the law of righteousness, and pursued it with great vigor and earnestness, did not attain unto it, because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law; (Rom. 9:31, 32) and this is the case of every man that takes the same course: nay, it is not only vain and fruitless to attempt to obtain righteousness that way, but it is sinful and wicked for such who go about to establish their own righteousness, not only betray their ignorance of God's righteousness, and the pride and vanity of their hearts, and trust in themselves, and despise others, but even submit not to, yea treat with neglect and contempt, the righteousness of the God-man and mediator, Jesus Christ. (Rom. 10:3) But then,

2dly, In other respects the law continues invariable, unalterable, and unchangeable; nor is it made null and void under the gospel-dispensation, or by it; Do we make void the law through faith? Do we disannul it, set it aside, and make no use of it, or render it of no effect, either through the grace of faith, or believing in Christ, or through the doctrine of faith in general, the gospel, or through the particular doctrine of justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ, of which doctrine the apostle is treating? God forbid; it is detested by us, yea, we establish the law: (Rom. 3:31) we set it on its proper basis, on a sure foundation; and bring that righteousness to it wrought out by Christ, which is commensurate to all its demands, and gives it honour: for we know that the law is good, the author of it is good, who is God; the matter of it is good, being holy, just, and good; and the use of it is good, if a man use it lawfully; (1 Tim. 1:8) for there is a lawful and an unlawful use of the law. It is used unlawfully when men make the works of it the terms of their acceptance with God, the matter of their justification before him, and the causes or conditions of their salvation. Otherwise it may be law fully used; and it is of use to believers themselves, as,

1. To point out to them what is the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God; (Rom. 7:2) what that is which is holy, just, and good; what ought to be done, or not

to be done; what should be carefully performed, and what shunned and avoided; what is a man's duty to God and to his neighbour. For the law of God, as we have seen, includes both, and is a transcript of the holy and unchangeable will of God; what is his pleasure men should do or abstain from.

2. Another use of it, and for which it remains, is, that it is a glass in which believers may behold the deformity of their nature, the impurity of their hearts, and the imperfection of their obedience; and it is only of this use to enlightened minds: for of what service is a glass to a blind man? hold it before him, and he can see nothing in it, or by it: so set the law before an unenlightened sinner, and he will see nothing in it, nor through it; but an enlightened man, a believer in Christ, can see his face in it, and perceive what manner of man he is, in his nature, life, and actions: and when he compares himself with the law that is holy, just, good, and spiritual, he sees that he is in himself unholy unrighteous, evil, and carnal, and sold under sin, as the apostle did: (Rom. 7:12, 14) when he is led to observe the extent of the law, and the spirituality of it, reaching to the thoughts of the heart, as well as to the outward actions of life; he cries out with David, I have seen an end of all perfections, thy commandment is exceeding broad: (Ps. 119:96) he despairs of attaining to perfection by it, and even of attaining to a righteousness through it, adequate to its requirements; he grows out of conceit with himself and his own righteousness, which he now renounces and rejects in the business of his justification before God, and acceptance with him. Wherefore,

3. The law is occasionally of further use to believers, to endear the righteousness of Christ unto them, and to make them value it the more; when they see their own righteousness in the account of the law, being neither as to matter nor manner done as that requires; that it is a covering too narrow to wrap themselves in, and a bed too short to stretch themselves on; that it will not cover their naked souls, nor shelter them from the wrath and justice of God, or render them acceptable in his sight. How precious then is the righteousness of Christ, when set before them as revealed in the gospel, from faith to faith; that being the righteousness of God and not of a creature; a righteousness pure and perfect, well-pleasing in the sight of God, answerable to all the demands of law and justice, which justifies

them that believe, from all things they could not be justified from by the law of Moses; an everlasting righteousness, and which will answer for them in a time to come! hence they love it, prize it, praise it, lay hold upon it, and desire to be found in it, living and dying, and not in their own.

4. The law is in the hands of Christ as a rule of walk and conversation, directing believers how to conduct and behave themselves under his influence. The whole scripture, given by inspiration of God, is the standard of faith and practice, and the rule of both; the gospel-part of it is profitable for doctrine, and is the test of that; and the law-part of it respects duty, and points to that; wherefore to the law and to the testimony; if men speak not, and act not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. (Isai. 8:20) Christ is king and lawgiver in his house and kingdom, the church and besides some positive commands which he has delivered out, there is a repetition of the law in the New Testament; a new edition of it, published under the authority and sanction of Christ; so that we are now under the law to him, (1 Cor. 9:21) and under new obligations to obey it, as held forth by him. And it is to be obeyed from love, in faith, and to the glory of God, without any sinister, selfish, mercenary ends and views. It is to be obeyed from love to God and Christ; the end of the commandment is charity, or love; out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and faith unfeigned: (1 Tim. 1:5) not the terrors of the law, but the love of Christ constrains believers in him to yield a cheerful obedience to it: which they do through faith in him, depending on him for grace and strength to serve him in it. Of all men in the world none are under greater obligations to be careful to maintain good works than believers, and none so capable of performing them as they, and none so ready to do them; and in doing which they seek not themselves, but the glory of God; and which, as it should be, they make their chief end, as in civil things, so much more in religious duties; and when they have done all they can, and are assisted to do, they own they are but unprofitable servants; do not and cannot merit any thing at the hands of God, but expect eternal life and salvation as the free gift of God through Christ. And now, true believers, who behold the law in the hand of Christ, and as fulfilled by him, delight in it, after the inward man; and though with the flesh they serve the

law of sin, to the grief and distress of their souls, yet with the mind the law of God. (Rom. 7:22, 25)

Upon the whole, let it be an instruction and direction to you to look to the law only as in Christ; viewed otherwise it is a terrible law, a fiery one, working wrath and threatening with it; throwing out its menaces, curses, damnation and death; but view it in Christ, and there it is fulfilled, its curse is removed, its demands answered, and that itself magnified and made honourable: and appears lovely and amiable, to be delighted in and served with pleasure. Look upon both tables of the law as in the ark, look to the ark, and them in that; and forget not to cast an eye to the mercy-seat so near it, which was a cover or lid unto it, and of equal length and breadth with it; the mystery of which you will easily understand, that Christ in his obedience, sufferings, and death, and as the propitiation, is equal to all the demands of law and justice. The ark, with the tables in it, the mercy-seat upon that., the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy-seat, between which the Shekinah or divine Majesty dwelt, are such a glorious spiritual hieroglyphic as was never seen in the world besides; such a group of wonders, such an assemblage of the mysteries of grace, such a cluster of glorious truths are in it, which when you behold, say, if ever you saw a sight like this! The ark, and the tables in it, signify, as we have seen, Christ, and the law fulfilled by him, and continued in him; the mercy-seat, Christ the propitiation, and the grace and mercy of God streaming through him as such; the cherubim, the ministers of the word in general; and being two, may respect the prophets of the Old Testament, and the apostles and ministers of the New, looking at one another, and agreeing together, and both pointing at Christ the mercy-seat; among whom Jehovah dwells, and with whom he is and will be unto the end of the world. Here may be seen at once the law fulfilled and justice satisfied, mercy in its triumphs over justice, and yet both in perfect harmony and concord. Here mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace kiss each other. Most of these truths may be seen together in one passage of the apostle; whom, speaking of Christ, God hath set forth, in his eternal purposes and decrees, to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, that he

might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. (Rom. 3:25, 26)

10 The Glory Of God's Grace Displayed, In Its Abounding Over The Abounding Of Sin

Occasioned by the Death of Mr. John Smith,
Preached at the Time of his Interment,

April 15, 1724.

Moreover, the law entered, that the office might abound: but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord— Romans 5:20, 21.

It is the manifest design of this Epistle to explain and vindicate the great doctrine of a sinner's free justification before God by the imputed righteousness of Christ: And in order to set this doctrine in its proper light, our apostle takes this following method; he first proves that all mankind, both Jews and Gentiles, are involved in the guilt, and are under the power of sin; that they are all destitute of a righteousness, and not capable of attaining one by the deeds of the law: and then proceeds to tell us, that that righteousness, by which a sinner is justified before God, is manifested without the law, though both the law and the prophets bear testimony to it; that it is the righteousness, of God, wrought out by one who is God, as well as man; that our justification by it springs from pure, free, and rich grace, through the redemption that is in Christ; and that the way by which it is conveyed and applied to us, is by an act of God the Father imputing it to us, and by our faith apprehending it, as our justifying righteousness before God; from whence abundance of peace, joy and comfort arise to our souls: This is now the sum and substance of the first four chapters of this Epistle; and in this fifth chapter, our apostle sets forth the stupendous love of the Father in giving his Son to die, and the inexpressible love of Christ in shedding his precious blood for sinners, whilst such, that they might be justified by it, and saved from wrath to come; and also takes an occasion to compare the heads of the two covenants, Adam and Christ, and shew, how sin and death came into the world by the one, and righteousness and life by the other; and how much the glory of superabounding grace appears in our justification to life by Christ.

And in handling this great doctrine of justification, he does, as he goes along, obviate those objections which were then formed against it; "that it made void the law, discouraged the performance of good works, and countenanced licentiousness;" which are the very same objections that are now formed against it; and which, to me, is an evidence of the sameness of doctrine; that is to say, that the doctrine of justification by Christ's imputed righteousness, which we preach and assert, is the same which the apostle preached and asserted, because the same objections are leveled against the one as the other; and confirms me in the belief of this, that the doctrine of justification by works is not the scripture-doctrine, because it will not admit the same objections to be made against it, which that doctrine had. Now I apprehend that there is in the words which I have read, an anticipation of an objection, which might be made against the doctrine the apostle had asserted, after this manner; If there is no justification by the deeds of the law, if sin was in the world, and death by sin so universally extended its empire before the law was given, then for what purpose was the law introduced? The apostle answers, that the offense might abound; an answer much like to that which he gives to a like objection in Galatians 3:9: Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions.

Though it is thought by others, that the apostle having treated concerning the state of things from Adam to Moses, subjoins those words, lest any should think that the law was given to deliver men from sin, and repair the loss sustained thereby; however, it is evident from the words, that one end or consequence of the law's entrance was, that sin might abound; and sin is permitted to abound, that there might be an opportunity, or an occasion for super-abounding grace to manifest itself; and grace does thus abound, that so it might reign.

My time will not allow me to make and improve those doctrinal observations, which there fruitful words would furnish us with; therefore the method which I shall take in speaking to them, will be to discourse,

I. Concerning the law's entrance, and the end or consequence thereof.

II. The aboundings of grace over abounding sin.

III. The reign of grace in opposition to the reign of

sin.

I. I shall discourse concerning the law's entrance, and the end or consequence of it; it will therefore be proper to explain there three things in discoursing on this head.

1. What we are to understand by the law.
2. What by the entrance of it.
3. In what sense the offense abounded by it.

1. What we are to understand by the law: By the law is meant either the ceremonial or the moral law; the ceremonial law was a shadow of good things to come; it prefigured the Lord Jesus Christ, and was the Jews schoolmaster, which led them to him; it consisted in the observation of meats and drinks, and divers washings and carnal ordinances imposed on the Jewish church, until the time of reformation (Heb. 9:10). It may not be amiss if we consider a little, how far the words will bear this sense.

The ceremonial law entered but for a time, it was not to continue always; and this is thought by some to be the import of the Greek word *παρεισηλθεν*; and it is the observation of one of the ancients, that the apostle does not say the law was given, but it entered, and that on purpose to shew that the use of the law was but temporary. The moral law abides for ever, as a rule of life, but the ceremonial law was to continue but for a time, even until faith came (Gal. 3:23, 25), that is, Christ, who is both the object and author of faith; for Christ the substance being come, those shadows vanished and disappeared: His blood being shed, which cleanseth from all sin, no more need of the blood of bulls and goats, nor of those divers washings and purifications; this great sacrifice being offered up, the daily sacrifice ceased; and spiritual ordinances being instituted, no more need of carnal ones.

Again; The ceremonial law was superadded to the moral law; it was an appendage to it, it entered in over and above that. The moral law was given to discover the evil of sin; the ceremonial law was superadded to it to lead the faith of God's children, under that dispensation, to a proper atoning sacrifice for it.

Again; The ceremonial law was an indication of that great evil which is in sin; God's requiring sacrifices to be offered for the typical expiation of sin, does manifestly shew how highly he relented it, and of what an evil nature it is; and if you will but consider the frequent reiteration of those sacrifices, and how

there was, notwithstanding them, a remembrance of sin made every year (Heb. 10:1-4); also how far short of perfection these sacrifices left the comers thereunto, and how impossible it was that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin; you will then easily observe the vile nature of sin, and how it abounded and became exceeding sinful by this law.

Lastly, As the design of this law was to lead the faith of God's children to the person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ; so it was not only to shew us what sin is, and how highly displeasing to the great God; but also how much his superabounding grace appears in the remission of it, through the blood and sacrifice of Christ prefigured thereby; so that where sin abounded grace did much more abound. But then,

By the law may be meant the moral law, which was given by Moses, and is mentioned in apparition to that grace and truth which came by Christ. The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ (John 1:17). The sum of which law is love to God, and love to our neighbor; as appears from the answer which Christ gave the lawyer who put this question to him; saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment: And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments, hang all the law and the prophets (Matthew 22:35-37). Hence it is that the apostle Paul says, that love is the fulfilling of the law (Rom. 13:10). And this is the law which I apprehend is meant in the words of my text. I shall now therefore consider,

2. What is meant by the entrance of this law. We may consider the law as it entered into the world by Moses, as it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator on mount Sinai, and also as it enters into the conscience of a poor sinner.

The entrance of the law by Moses, does not suppose that there was no law previous to that which was given by him; for there was a law of nature which was inscribed on Adam's heart, and continued there during his innocent state; same broken remains of which are yet to be found, even in the very Heathens, as is manifest from Romans 2:14, 15.

Besides this, there was also a positive law given to

Adam as a covenant-head, recorded in Genesis. But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die. Through the transgression of which law he ruined himself and all his posterity, and that for ever, had it not been for the kind interposition and efficacious mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus then there was a law antecedent to the law being given on mount Sinai.

Nor does it suppose that this law, which entered into the world by Moses, is of a different nature from that which was inscribed on Adam's heart, in his state of innocence; but only that it was delivered in another manner, the one was written upon the fleshly table of the heart, the other upon tables of stone; the one was given to Adam to be kept by him, the other was put into the ark, which ark was a type of Christ; the one was delivered as a covenant of works, the other only as a rule of life, to shew what is to be done, and what to be avoided, to discover the nature of sin, and the creature's inability to keep that law; in order that souls under a sense of these things, might make application to Christ, who was made under this law, and is become the fulfilling end of it for righteousness to every one that believes (Rom. 10:4): so that the law of nature, and the law of Moses, for substance, are the same. Again:

The word here used may denote the time of its entrance, it intervened, it came, as it were, between Adam's sin, and Christ's sacrifice for it; the offense was committed long before the law entered; and the law entered long before Christ's sacrifice was offered; it entered into the world between them both. The offense is permitted, and after some considerable time the law is given, that the offense might abound; and after as long a time, Christ comes to atone for this offense, that grace might superabound. Quickly after the offense was committed, a promise of grace was made; now between that promise, and the fulfilling of it, the law entered. But we may consider the law, as it enters into the conscience of a poor sinner, and thus it enters privately, secretly, and as it were by stealth; and in this sense is the word used, where we read of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily, *παρεισηλθον*, crept in, as it were by stealth, to spy out our liberty; now the law as given by Moses, did not enter in such a manner; there were present

ten thousands of saints, that is, Angels. And so also when the Lord spake the ten words, all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; (Ex. 20:18); so that the law was not given in a private manner, but in the presence of angels and men. But when the law comes and enters into the conscience of a man, it is suddenly, at unawares, and it immediately causes sin to abound. An instance of this, we have in the apostle Paul; for I was alive, says he, without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died (Rom. 7:9).

He thought himself, before the commandment came, as good, holy and righteous as any man, and in as fair a way for heaven; but when the commandment came nearer to his conscience, and he saw the perfection; and spirituality of it, and was thereby powerfully convinced of the filthiness of his nature, and the imperfection of his obedience, immediately sin revives, abounds, and appears exceeding sinful, and he becomes a dead man in his own apprehension; thus the words may be referred to the use of the law; though I am rather inclined to think they are to be understood of the law's entrance by Moses. Thus much for the law's entrance; we shall now consider,

3. The end or consequence thereof; that was, that the offense might abound: By the offense, we may understand either the sin of Adam, or any, or all other sins, and transgressions; there is some reason to believe that by the offense, the apostle primarily intends the sin of Adam; because it is that sin which he particularly treats of in the preceding verses, as also the word *παραπτωμα*, which the apostle makes use of here, signifies a fall, and so may intend what we commonly call the fall of

Adam; though, I confess, the word is sometimes used for actual sins and transgressions. But however, it may not be amiss to consider how this offense of Adam's abounded by the entrance of the law of Moses.

1st, The guilt of Adam's sin has abounded to all his posterity, being imputed to them; for in the preceding verses we are told, that by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; and that by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners. Now the apostle asserts, in Romans 4:15 that where there is no law, there is no transgression; and in Romans 5:13. that sin is not imputed where there is no law;

so that the objection then is, how could sin exist, and be imputed, and death by it reign over the sons of men, when there was no law given? I answer, There was, as I have before observed, a law of nature written upon Adam's heart, the same in substance with the law on mount Sinai; which last was broke, through the violation of a positive command, and thereby sin did exist, and was justly imputed by God; Adam then standing as a common person, and representative of all mankind; but by the fall, this law and light of nature became weak and dim, so that the existence and imputation of sin did not appear so manifest; wherefore the great God thought fit to renew the law on Sinai, that the offense might be more conspicuous, and the imputation of it appear more just; thus the law entered, that the offense might abound.

2dly, Not only the guilt of this sin is imputed, but a corrupt nature is propagated to all his posterity; for who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one (Job 14:4): This corruption of nature, which is sometimes called by the apostle, sin, and sin that dwells in us, abounds in every man, and by the law abounds more and more, according to what the apostle says in Romans 7:8, But sin taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence; that is, "This inherent corruption of my nature took the opportunity, through the law's prohibition of sin, to stir up in me the lusts of the flesh, and carnal desires of the mind, and pushed me on to a performance of sinful actions." Thus the law entered, that the offense might abound. But,

3dly, By the entrance of the law of Moses, Adam's sin appears exceeding sinful, attended with aggravating circumstances. For though the eating of the forbidden fruit, may seem to be a small offense, yet if you consider what an indignity was offered to the great God thereby, how his divine authority in his holy command was trampled upon, the glorious perfections of his justice, truth and power were despised, his pure and perfect image in man, which consisted in righteousness, and true holiness, defaced, and also that glory which the creature by its service should have brought to him, lost: thereby, it was great.

"He at one slap (as it is well expressed by a learned divine) breaks both the tables, and all the commandments,

1. He chose him another God when he followed the

devil.

2. He idolized and deified his own belly.

3. He took the name of God in vain, when he believed him not.

4. He kept not the rest and estate wherein God had let him.

5. He dishonoured his father which was in heaven; and therefore his days were not long in that land, which the Lord his God had given him.

6. He massacred himself, and all his posterity.

7. He committed spiritual fornication in eyes and mind.

8. He stole that which God had set aside not to be meddled with.

9. He bare witness against God, when he believed the witness of the devil above him.

10. He coveted an evil covetousness, which cost him his life, and all his progeny."

Thus he broke all the commandments. Now it is the law, which thus discovers the heinousness of this sin, in those particular instances. And in this sense the law entered, that the offense might abound.

By the offense we may also understand any, or all actual sins and transgressions; now let us see in what sense they abound by the law.

First, The law makes a plain and open discovery of them, and lets them forth in their own proper colors; for by the law is the knowledge of sin (Rom. 3:20; 7:7), yea, the apostle tells us, that he had not known sin but by the law; it is a glass wherein we may behold in the light of the Spirit, our inward deformities, as well as the grosser sins of life; though it is neither a magnifying, nor a multiplying glass, it does not make sins to appear greater than they are, nor more than they really be; but it discovers those sins to be great ones, which before were looked upon to be but small; and those to be sins, which before were not esteemed so; and thus sin abounds by the law's entrance.

Secondly, It makes sin to abound by a prohibition of it; not that any fault is to be charged upon the law; but upon the corrupt heart of man, which, the more it is restrained and prohibited from doing any thing, the more eager it is to effect it. It is just like a person in a violent fever, who the more he is restrained from drinking, the more he thirsts after it; or like a torrent of water, which when attempts are made to stop it, it rises, swells, rages, and overflows the more; such is the

untoward, perverse and corrupt heart of man: thus when the Lord would have the Israelites go into the land of Canaan, then they refuse; but when the Lord had forbid them to enter, then they must needs go in all haste; so also when circumcision was God's ordinance, then the nations round about loathed it, and the Jews for it; but when it was abolished by Christ's death, then it needs must be taken up, as necessary to salvation. Oh, the abominable corruption of man's heart!

Thirdly, The law being given, sin committed against it, is attended with more aggravating circumstances; it is committed against light and knowledge; here can be no plea of ignorance, no cloke for sin; for he that knows his Lord's will, and does not according to it, shall be beaten with many stripes (Luke 12:47); it is bidding an open defiance to heaven, and a despising and trampling under foot the majesty and authority of God, instamped on his law; for according to the majesty and greatness of the lawgiver, does the offense in. proportion arise: This law, which sin is the transgression of, being given forth by that great lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy (Jam. 4:12); makes the offense to be the more heinous. And thus by the entrance of the law sin abounds. This may suffice for the. first head of. discourse. I shall now,

II. Discourse concerning the abounding of grace over the aboundings of sin. First, I shall endeavor to shew where it does so. Secondly, Give some instances of God's superabounding grace.

First, I shalt endeavor to shew where it does do so; that is, where grace does so much abound, more than sin.

1. In the human nature; sin did and does abound therein. No sooner did sin enter into the world, but, like a fretting leprosy, it overspread and infected it; all human nature being then in Adam, the blood of all being then in his veins, was tainted by sin; and he then representing all his posterity, they sinned in him, according to Romans 5:12, Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that $\phi\epsilon\omicron\nu\ \omega\phi$, in whom all have sinned.

Sin so abounded in, and by Adam to all his posterity, that there is not one, who descends from him by ordinary generation, who is free from it. Jews and Gentiles are all under it; there is none righteous, no not one (Rom. 3:9), the disease is universal and epidemically. Now our Lord Jesus Christ, in the

fullness of time assumed the same human nature; because the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same (Heb. 2:14), and the nature which Christ assumed, was attended with all sinless, though not sinful infirmities; therefore he is said to be sent in the likeness of sinful flesh, and not in sinful flesh itself; now in this nature Christ appeared full of grace and truth; there is an infinite, inexhaustible, overflowing, and superabounding fullness of grace dwells in him, that we from thence might receive grace for grace. Thus in the same kind of nature, where sin abounded, grace does much more abound.

2. In the several powers and faculties of the soul, where sin abounded, grace does much more abound. Sin has abounded, and does abound, in every power and faculty of the soul of a natural man; as the disease is universal, with regard to persons, the descendents of Adam, so it is with regard to the several parts and faculties of the souls of those persons. What is said of the Jews, in their political state; is true of every man in his natural state; the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint; from the sole of the foot, even unto the head, there, is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises, and putrefying sores (Isa. 1:5, 6); they are not only destitute of all righteousness, but filled with all unrighteousness; empty of all that is good, and full of all that is evil; sin abounds and overflows in their corrupt hearts, which are continually casting up the mire and dirt of sin; from thence proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies (Matthew 15:19).

O, what an abounding, what an overflowing of sin is here? The heart is hardened, and dead in trespasses and sins, the will obstinate and perverse, the judgment depraved, the understanding darkened, the mind and conscience defiled, and the affections become inordinate. What wretched work has the abounding of sin made in the soul of man!

Now where sin has thus abounded, grace in effectual vocation superabounds; for by powerful efficacious grace, in conversion, the stony heart is taken out of the flesh, and an heart of flesh is given; new principles of life and love infused, and all sorts of grace implanted; the will is subdued and brought into subjection to Christ, the judgment is informed, and the understanding enlightened; nay, an understanding given to know him, whom to know is life eternal; the

mind and conscience are purged from dead works to serve the living God, and the affections set upon things which are above. What an amazing, surprising change is this! O, abounding, superabounding grace!

3. This is true of the poor Gentiles, among whom sin has abounded, and grace also has much more abounded; and this the Syriac scholiast particularly takes notice of in this place; sin exceedingly spread itself, and overflowed in the Gentile world; there being nothing but the dim light of nature to guide, and no positive laws and commands of God to direct them, no wonder that sin should so much abound among them; it having no other bounds nor limits, but the weak law of nature to restrain it; but the greatest wonder is, that grace should here superabound. This was the great mystery, which in other ages, preceding the gospel-dispensation, was not so made known to the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel (Eph. 3:5, 6).

How was the grace of God magnified in their vocation! the abounding of sin among them made the superabounding grace of God appear the more glorious: what beauty and glory does the apostle cast upon the free, and rich grace of God, manifested in the conversion of Gentile sinners? Who, when he had drawn up a large list and catalogue of the vilest sinners, adds, And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God (1 Cor. 6:9-11). Thus where sin to much abounded, grace did much more abound.

4. This is eminently true of some particular persons, such as a Manasseh, a Mary Magdalene, a Paul before conversion, who looked upon himself as the chiefest of sinners, and could not but admire superabounding grace in his conversion; saying, I, who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious, I obtained mercy (1 Tim. 1:13); and so must every one, more or less, admire boundless grace, who have been plucked as brands out of the burning, and translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. But I will now proceed,

Secondly, To give some instances of God's superabounding grace in the actings of it, to us-ward who believe.

1st, Superabounding grace manifests and discovers

itself in conversion and regeneration; the state out of which sinners are brought, and the blessings, which are then bestowed, as also the mighty grace, which is then wrought, and the surprising change, which is then effected in them, are so many evidences of the overflowings of God's love and grace towards them, and in them. Well may the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ be said to beget us again unto a lively hope, according to his abundant mercy (1 Pet. 1:3), abundant mercy indeed! Abounding, superabounding grace! That he should, without any regard to our will or works, of his own will beget us with the word of truth (Jam. 1:18), and quicken us when dead in trespasses and sins; is an instance of his free, rich, sovereign, inconceivable and eternal love; here is the first display and discovery of grace and mercy to a poor sinner; it is true, there was grace and mercy in God's heart before, grace and mercy in the covenant before, and grace and mercy shewn in giving Christ, but until now the poor soul knew nothing of it. This river of God's love and grace ran under-ground from all eternity, and is now broke up in effectual vocation, and comes with its full flows into the sinners heart; which is now plentifully filled therewith, having as much as its narrow vessel can receive; so that where sin abounded, grace does much more abound; an instance of this we have in the apostle Paul, who tells us in 1 Timothy 1:14, And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus; was exceeding abundant, υπερεπλεονασε, there was an over-plus of it; he had as much, nay more, than he could contain; it overflowed, it ran over and over; O abounding, superabounding grace!

Nay further, as there is a display of grace in the conveyance of it into the sinner's heart at conversion, even to a redundancy, so there is a sight and view given to the soul of exceedingly much more in the heart of God; it beholds God as the God of all grace, and views a boundless ocean of love and grace in him; O glorious sight! O happy discovery! this is what the apostle prayed for, for the Ephesians, that they might be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge (Eph. 3:18, 19).

Again, Superabounding grace manifests itself in our justification; how often does the apostle in the preceding verses, when he takes notice of the grace of

God, displayed in Christ's justifying righteousness, use those words, much more, in order to set forth the great abundance thereof? The grace of God is manifest in sending Christ to bring in this righteousness, by which we are justified; and the grace of Christ is as evident in working it out; and when it was wrought out, the grace of the Father appears in accepting it in our room and stead, as also in imputing it to us, without works, and giving us faith to lay hold upon it: In short, there is so much of the grace of God conspicuous herein, that we are said to be justified freely by it (Rom.3:24). And a learned interpreter, upon this place, is of opinion, that by this superabounding grace we are to understand, by a metonymy of the adjunct, the obedience of Christ, which is of grace imputed to us for righteousness; it is certain, that there is more virtue in Christ's righteousness to justify, than there is in sin to condemn; for those who are once justified should never be condemned, there being no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus. Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? (Rom. 8:1, 34), who dare do it? who can do it? and if they do, to what purpose will it be! seeing it is God that justifies; who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died, Those who are justified by Christ, are completely justified from all things from which they could not be by the law of Moses; they are perfectly justified from all sin, and eternally secured from all wrath and condemnation. O glorious grace!

Again, Superabounding grace appears in the forgiveness of our sins: what rich grace is this, that our sins, which are many, should be forgiven us! Sins which are attended, with aggravating circumstances, sins against light and knowledge, against grace and mercy, secret and open sins; sins before and after conversion; sins of thought, word, and deed, of omission and commission; all sins, past, present, and to come; all are fully and freely pardoned through the blood of Christ, according to the riches of God's grace; grace! rich grace indeed! What reason had a David, a Manasseh, a Mary Magdalene, a Peter, to admire this abounding grace in the pardon of their sins? Nay, has not every pardoned soul reason so to do? What grace is it, that God should lay our iniquities on Christ, and that he should bear them, and take them away? that God should remove them as far from us as the east is from the west, and blot them out, and remember them

no more; that when they are sought for, they shall not be found, because he hath pardoned those, whom he hath reserved for himself! (Jer. 1:20).

So also it does appear in our adoption; that we, who are by nature children of wrath, even as others, whole carnal minds have been at enmity against God, should be adopted into his family, is grace indeed; had he made us his servants, it had been an act of grace; but to make us his sons, is an act of superabounding grace; so that we have reason to say as the apostle John: Behold what manner of love hath the Father bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God (1 John 3:1).

If we consider what we were by nature, how unlovely and undesirable, and that God stood in no need of us, we need not wonder to hear him thus saying, how shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations? though we have a great deal of reason to wonder and be amazed to hear him say, thou shalt call me my father, and shalt not turn away from me (Jer.3:19).

Now as the superabounding grace of God does thus appear in our regeneration, justification, remission and adoption, so also it will in our glorification; for our salvation is all of grace, from first to last. If it is an act of abounding grace to beget us again to a lively hope of an incorruptible inheritance, and to make us heirs of it, then will it be much more so, to put us into the possession of it: if we can observe superabounding grace now, we shall be much more capable of observing it in that state where all imperfection will be done away; then shall we bring forth the head-stone with shoutings, crying, grace, grace, unto it. This will be the delightful theme and happy subject, which the saints shall be entertained with throughout the endless ages of eternity.

But before I dismiss this second general head, I would just observe to you, that this clause in the text seems to be added to prevent despondency, and to comfort distressed minds, who, seeing that the law was so far from justifying from sin, or diminishing it in them, that; on the contrary, it abounded by it, might imagine that there was no room to hope for deliverance, and so give way to diffidence and despair; the apostle, I say, seems to add these words, to prevent this, and administer comfort, but where sin abounded,

grace did much more abound; that though sin has overflowed all human nature, and spread itself over all the powers and faculties of the soul of man, yet there is an infinite fullness of grace with God, which grace he plentifully sheds abroad in the hearts of poor sinners: Therefore let Israel hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption (Ps. 130:7).

Also these words may be considered as the end of the permission of sin, and the entrance of the law, that it might abound. God voluntarily permitted the sin of Adam, and that with a design to magnify the glory of his grace in the salvation of sinners; he suffered that first sin to enter into the world, which was the foundation of all after ones, that he might have an opportunity of displaying the perfections of his grace and mercy; then he sends the law into the world, that thereby, that sin, and all others, might appear in their proper colors, as they are in themselves, exceeding sinful; that so the sinner himself, in the light of the spirit, might more easily observe the superabounding grace of God in his deliverance from them. This may suffice for the second head of discourse. I now proceed to discourse,

III. Concerning the reign of grace, in opposition to the reign of sin. It may be very proper, in the first place, to say something concerning the reign of sin, which the apostle affirms was unto death.

The dominion of sin is universal; it has extended its empire over the whole race of human creatures: Elect, as well as non-elect, are under the power and dominion of it, until by irresistible, powerful, and efficacious grace, they are translated out of that kingdom into the kingdom of God's dear Son; and then sin shall not have dominion (Rom. 6:14) οὐκυριευσέι, "shall not lord it over them," because they are not under the law, but under grace; they are then no longer the subjects of sin, because translated into another kingdom, and so become the subjects of Christ; who is the head of the covenant of grace, as Adam was of the covenant of works; by whom sin, and death by sin, set up their empire in the world. Now it does not become any of those who profess themselves to be Christ's subjects, to yield any obedience to the laws or lusts of sin; let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof (Rom. 6:12).

And as sin's empire is universal over every man,

in a natural state, so its seat and throne are in every heart which is in the same condition; from thence it issues forth its laws, which have a mighty power in them to enforce obedience thereunto, from the several parts, both of soul and body: Hence you read of the law of sin, in opposition to the law of the mind, which law of sin has sometimes very great strength in a regenerate man, and is a ruling governing principle in an unregenerate one; even as the law of the mind, or the law of grace, is a ruling governing principle in a believer, also mention is made of it, in opposition to the law of God, the one requiring obedience thereunto, equally as the other; as also you will find that and the law of death coupled together, because the kingdoms of both are of the same beginning, extent and duration when sin entered into the world, death did so too; when sin let up its empire, death did likewise: over whom sin reigns, death does also; and when the one ceases, then will the other; their laws, interests, and kingdoms stand and fall together (Rom. 5:12, 14).

And as it has erected a government in the world, and issues forth its laws, so it has its voluntary subjects, who observe there laws, not out of fear, but love; though while they promise themselves liberty, they become the servants of corruption; and are mere slaves and vassals to sin, while they are so greedily fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind: And for all this hearty and cheerful service, they will have no other stipend paid them, than death; for the wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23); which is what our apostle intends, when he here says, that sin hath reigned unto death: and how it has done so, will deserve our consideration. Sin hath reigned unto death,

1. By subjecting all to a corporal death; this is what is intended in the threatening annexed to that positive law given to Adam, as a public person, mentioned in Genesis 2:17 though not to be understood exclusive, either of a spiritual or eternal death. Now Adam breaking that law, he himself immediately entered into a state of mortality; from that time his body became mortal, and a sentence of death passed upon him, and all his posterity; so that from that time this kind of death, or what is equivalent to it, has reigned, and will continue to the end of the world to reign over all the sons and daughters of Adam. But here a question arises, which deserves consideration, and that is this, namely, How comes it to pass that

believers are not exempted from this kind of death, seeing Christ has undergone it in their room and stead, and made satisfaction for that sin, and all other sins of theirs, which first introduced it? I answer, It is true, Christ has done all this for them, and yet they are not exempted from death; nevertheless, through Christ's death and satisfaction, it ceases to be a penal evil, it is disarmed of its sting, and becomes one of the believers' privileges, death is yours (1 Cor. 3:22). So that now, blessed are the dead that die in the Lord; the saints may, as often they do, in their last moments, when God puts it in their mouths, sing that song, O death where is thy sting! O grave where is thy victory! (1 Cor. 15:55).

For death to them is the end of all sorrow, a total abolition of sin, and a happy transitus or passage to the heavenly glory; and therefore it is they are not exempted from it.

2. Sin hath reigned unto death, by bringing upon all a spiritual death, whereby they are destitute of all spiritual life and motion, and incapacitated to perform any spiritual action; and in this condition are all the elect of God, as well as others, till the Spirit of life from God enters and speaks life into them; and you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1); where the apostle does not only observe, to the believing Ephesians, the blessing of grace which was then bestowed on them, and that deplorable condition which they were formerly in; but also what it was which brought them into it, namely, their sins and trespasses; for, if it had not been for grace, they had never been quickened, so if it had not been for sin, they had never been dead. But,

3. Sin hath reigned unto death, inasmuch as it hath rendered all deferring of eternal death; for the wages of sin is death, that is, eternal death, as is manifest from the antithesis or opposition, in the following words, but the gift of God is eternal life; and this bids fair to be the sense of the words in my text; for if the reign of grace be according to the reign of sin, and the reign of grace be unto eternal life, then the reign of sin must be unto eternal death. Now, I say, all, by sin, are deserving of this death, though it is not inflicted upon some, because of Christ's satisfaction, only upon those who live and die in a state of impenitence and unbelief; for the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and

sorcerers, and idolaters, and liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death (Rev. 21:8); what in another place of scripture is called eternal damnation, is here called the second death; a phrase peculiar to John in his Revelation, though frequently made use of by the ancient Jews in the same sense; thus you see in what sense sin hath reigned unto death.

I shall now consider the reign of grace, in opposition to this reign of sin. And we may, by grace here, understand either grace in the heart of God, which is gloriously displayed in our salvation, or else grace in our hearts, which is wrought there by the Spirit of God.

First, By grace may be meant, grace in the heart of God; and then taking it in this sense, we may observe that God's grand design in the contrivance, accomplishment, and application of man's salvation, is to set forth and magnify the glory of his grace; which end and design of his are effectually answered; for grace reigns, and reigns gloriously in every part thereof; it is gloriously displayed in the election of a certain number in Christ unto eternal life, and therefore called the election of grace (Rom. 11:5); upon the very mention of which, the apostle in the next words thus argues: And if by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no mere grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more of grace; otherwise work is no more work; an argument which the adversaries of grace can never answer; a dilemma they are plunged into, out of which they can never emerge. it is also gloriously displayed in that everlasting covenant made with Christ before the world began, which is so well stored with valuable blessings, and exceeding great and precious promises: It likewise gloriously appears in the mission of Christ into this world, to obtain eternal redemption for us; for God commended his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (Rom. 5:8): Grace also manifests itself in effectual vocation; for he hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus, before the world began (2 Tim. 1:9); and so also in our justification, adoption, remission, and glorification, as has been more fully evinced under the second general head. And now let us not forget to take notice, that this grace reigns in

a way of righteousness, consistent with the glorious perfections of God's holiness and righteousness. God, in drawing the glorious model and platform of man's salvation, so ordered it, that there should be no disagreement between the divine perfections, but that all should shine with an equal glory; and therefore he set forth Christ to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him, which believeth in Jesus (Rom. 3:26): So that through Christ's fulfilling the law, atoning for sin, and satisfying divine justice, the honour of God's holiness is effectually secured, and the glory of his righteousness displayed, as well as his grace and mercy magnified; thus mercy and truth are met together, and righteousness and peace have kissed each other (Ps. 85:10).

With this glorious scheme, and the sweet harmony of it, was our dear deceased friend often affected; and I scarce ever heard him mention this place of scripture, which is the subject our present discourse, but I always observed, that he took it in the sense now delivered, which made me the more willing to take notice of it.

But then again, grace reigns unto eternal life, by Christ; it shall never be frustrated; God will never be disappointed of his end, to wit, the glory of his grace. It reigned from all eternity, it reigns in time, and it will reign to all eternity: It reigned in the contrivance; it reigned in the accomplishment, and it reigns in the application of it; for God has so ordered it, that it should be by faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed (Rom. 4:16); and it will reign till it has brought us to the full possession of salvation, even eternal life, by Christ. But secondly, let us now consider the words, as they may refer to grace in us.

This supposes an ejection of the strong man armed, a demolition of sin's empire and throne in the sinner's heart; which are effected by the powerful grace of the Spirit, in making the weapons of our warfare effectually mighty for the pulling down those strong holds. It also supposes a principle of grace implanted by the same hand; which principle exerts itself, reigns, and maintains its ground against all opposition, which it will do, if true, though it be but small; for it is an incorruptible, immortal, never-dying seed, a well of water, which springs up unto eternal life; and a good work, which being begun, shall be performed until

the day of Christ.

Also this grace reigns by righteousness; it is supported and maintained by it; as Solomon says, the king's throne is established by righteousness; so is this throne of grace by Christ's righteousness imputed, and his grace imparted. All our peace, joy and comfort, in a great measure, result from, and are maintained by faith's living on Christ's righteousness, and by an apprehension of our justification by it; for being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into this grace, wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God (Rom. 5:1, 2).

Also this work of grace is maintained by fresh supplies of grace, from that fullness which is in Christ, out of which every believer does receive, more or less, even grace for grace. Now both these together, namely, righteousness imputed, and grace imparted, will bring a soul safe to eternal life. Christ's righteousness is our title to, and the Spirit's grace from Christ, is our meetness for, heaven; and without both there none shall enter there. Now I will only add this one observation more, that is, that all this grace, righteousness, and eternal life, come to us through Jesus Christ our Lord. All the discoveries of grace, which are made to our souls, are through Christ; and all that grace which is implanted in us, is from him, as well as all those fresh supplies by which it is maintained. Also that righteousness, by which we are justified, is in him, and that eternal life, which we are the expectants of, is through him.

Thus have I endeavored to open and explain to you, this glorious and comfortable portion of scripture, according to the desire of our deceased friend, whose character may now be expected from me. I apprehend that the design of funeral discourses is not to praise the dead, but to instruct the living; and sure I am, our dear friend had no such thing in view, when he desired a discourse from this text, on this occasion. How well he filled the relations of an husband and parent, his wife and children are here the mournful witnesses. How well that of a neighbor, many of you here present can attest; and how well he behaved himself as a member and officer of this church, that universal esteem he gained among the members thereof, is a sufficient indication. The inward frame of his soul was generally very warm and lively; and with an uncommon

seriousness, warmth and affection, would he speak of the great things of God. His light in the gospel was very considerable, and his conversation agreeable to that gospel which he professed; notwithstanding his employment in the world, daily threw him in the way of a great many snares and temptations. In short, he appeared to be an instance of mighty grace, reigning through righteousness unto eternal life. I shall add no more, but some brief improvement of this discourse, and so conclude.

1st, What encouragement is here for poor sinners from hence to hope for grace and mercy through Christ? What though, poor soul, thou seest the aboundings of sin in thy nature, and in every power and faculty of thy soul; yet look up and view the superabounding grace of God streaming through the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ; it is a mercy that thou seest the plague of thine own heart, and art not lest to thy native blindness, to a vain conceit of the goodness of thy estate, when thou wert poor, wretched, miserable, and blind and naked; take heart, therefore, and do not be discouraged; Christ's grace is sufficient for thee; and where sin abounded, grace hath much more so; there is enough in Christ for thee; there is righteousness to clothe, and bread to nourish, grace to sanctify, strength to support, and every thing needful for thee; go to him as a poor perishing sinner, implore his grace, and venture on him, I dare say he will not reject thee.

2dly, Though here is encouragement for sinners from hence, yet no encouragement to sin. The doctrine of grace is no licentious doctrine; it gives no liberty to sin, nor encourages persons in it; however it may be clamored against, and bespattered by persons who neither understand the doctrine, nor have felt the power of it on their souls: that though there is more grace in Christ to save us, than there is sin in us to damn us, or because the more sin has abounded in us, the more his grace superabounded in our salvation; does it thence follow that we are, by this doctrine encouraged to continue in sin that grace may abound? No, God forbid; how shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Which the apostle takes notice of in the beginning of the next chapter, foreseeing what objections would be formed against it, and how much it would be aspersed by a spiteful and ill-natured world. And whatever may be advanced against it,

this doctrine is the foundation of all real holiness, the saints bulwark against apostasy, and their magazine of solid consolation.

3dly, If the grace of God is so apparent in our salvation, what reason have we to admire it, and to glorify God for it? The grace of the Father abounds towards us, and the grace of the Son abounds towards us, and so does the grace of the Spirit; therefore we should be equally concerned for the glory of the eternal three, whole grace has much more abounded where sin did abound; and this we cannot but do, when we consider what has been bestowed on us, and how much more is yet in reserve for us, though we are altogether undeserving of it.

4thly, Seeing that without Christ's righteousness imputed, and his grace imparted, none can enter into the kingdom of heaven; how much should souls be concerned for both; that this grace might be within them, and Christ's righteousness put upon them, that being thus clothed, they may not be found naked?

And then, lastly, With what comfort can any look death in the face, if sin reigns over them, and not grace in them? over them will the second death reign eternally; for none shall reign with Christ in glory, but those in whose hearts grace has reigned here.

But, on the contrary; how cheerfully do those resign themselves into the arms of Christ when death approaches, who have known the grace of God in truth? these shall for ever reign with Christ, and dwell in his presence; in whole presence is fullness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore: there shall live in the continual view, enjoyment, and admiration of boundless grace; ascribing blessing and honour, and glory, and power, unto Him that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen.

11 A Good Hope Through Grace

Occasioned By The Death Of Mr. Edward Ludlow.
Preached Jan. 1, 1749.

...And good hope through grace.— 2 Thessalonians 2:16

Three things the apostle does in the context: he describes the happy state and condition of the persons he writes to; he exhorts them to stand fast in the faith, and hold fast the truth; and he prays for them.

First, He describes their happy state, in opposition to the followers of the man of sin, the son of perdition,

who were given up to believe a lie, that they might be damned. First, by their character, as Brethren, of Christ, of the apostle, and of one another, in a spiritual relation; and as beloved of the Lord, or of God, as some versions; of God the Father, who had so loved them as to give his Son for them; of the Lord Jesus Christ; who had given himself for them; and of the Lord the Spirit, who had quickened and sanctified, them: and he further describes them by their election of God, for which he thought himself bound to give thanks to God for them; the date of which is, from the beginning, or eternity; the means, sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth; the end, salvation; the evidence, the effectual call of them by the gospel to the enjoyment. of that glory, which Christ is in the possession of, and is preparing for them.

Secondly, He exhorts them to stand fast in the faith of the gospel, and not be moved away from it; seeing they were so much in the favor of God, were chosen, of him, and called by him: and to hold fast the traditions they had been instructed in, both by word of mouth and by letter: not the traditions of the Jewish elders; nor such like unwritten traditions the Papists plead for; but the truths and ordinances of the gospel; so called, because delivered by Christ to his apostles, and by them to the churches, either by speech, or by writing; and, are the evangelical cabala, which ought to be held fast till Christ's second coming:

Thirdly, He prays for them, as being most affectionately concerned for their welfare; and therefore, he follows his exhortations with petitions; well knowing this was the most effectual way to have them succeed. The objects addressed are, our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father; two divine persons in the godhead: and seeing our Lord Jesus Christ is equally prayed unto as God our Father; and the same things are asked of him as of the Father; and the same gifts and blessings of grace are ascribed to the one as to the other; yea, he is mentioned in the address before his Father; we may conclude his perfect equality with him, and so his true and proper deity; or prayer, which is such a considerable branch of worship, would not be made to him, nor would he be placed on an equal foot with his Father, and much less be set before him. The things prayed for are, that these divine persons would comfort their hearts; with fresh discoveries of their love to them; with

renewed applications of pardoning grace and mercy; with the exceeding great and precious promises of the gospel; by the word and ordinances of it; and by granting them fellowship with Father, Son, and Spirit, in private and in public: and also, that they would stablish them in every good ward and work; in every truth of the gospel, and in the practice of every duty. It is a good thing for a Christian to have his heart established in the doctrines of grace; and it is his honour to be steadfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord: and though the saints are in a firm and stable state, as being interested in everlasting love, secured in the covenant of grace, and safe in the arms of Christ; yet they have need of establishment in the present truths, that so they may not be carried away with the error of the wicked; and in the exercise of grace, that they may not fall from the steadfastness of their faith; and in the discharge of duty, that they be not drawn off from it. Now there is abundant reason to conclude that these petitions would be heard and, answered,

1. From the characters of the persons addressed, our Lord Jesus Christ himself. he who is our Lord, not by creation only, as he is Lord of all; but by redemption, having bought us with his precious blood, and therefore are not our own, but his; and by virtue of a marriage-relation to us, he having espoused us to himself in righteousness, mercy, and loving-kindness; and therefore, is our Lord, and we should worship him: and moreover he is Jesus, our Saviour and Redeemer, who has saved us from our Sins, and from wrath to come, with an everlasting salvation; and is the Christ of God, anointed to be Prophet, Priest, and King, which offices he sustains and executes for us; and therefore may it not reasonably be concluded that whatsoever is asked of him and in his name, will be granted? The other, person is God even our Father; not by creation merely, as he is of all men, who are his offspring, and the care of his providence; — but by adoption, through Jesus Christ: he who is Christ's God is our God, and he who is Christ's Father is our Father; which relation is owing to his free favor and love; and if earthly parents are ready and willing to give good gifts to their children to the utmost of their power; will not our heavenly Father give every good and needful thing to his children, so near and dear to

him? And which may be further concluded,

2. From the love each person bore to those for whom the petitions are presented: which hath loved us; which relates both to God our Father, and to our Lord Jesus Christ, who have both loved us; such who were by nature children of wrath, enemies in their minds by wicked works; and were far from having any true love to God or Christ; so far from it, that they were enmity itself unto them, and yet loved by them. Matchless, unparalleled Grace ! The Father loved them, and therefore appointed them not unto the wrath they deserved, but to obtain salvation by Jesus Christ; loved them, and therefore made a covenant with them in Christ, ordered in all things and sure, full of precious promises and spiritual blessings, suited to their cases and circumstances; loved them, and therefore made them the care and charge of his Son, put them into his hands, and laid up grace and glory for them; loved them, and therefore sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be the Saviour and Redeemer of them; loved them, and therefore spared him not, but delivered him up into the hands of justice and death for them; loved them, and therefore begot them again to a lively hope, and quickened them when dead in trespasses and sins; loved them, and therefore justified them, pardoned them, and adopted them into his family, and made them heirs of himself, and joint-heirs with Christ. And our Lord Jesus Christ himself loved them with the same love his Father did, and as early; and therefore in eternity became their surety, and espoused their persons and cause; loved them, and therefore in time assumed their nature, bore their sorrows, took upon him their sins, and suffered for them; loved them, and therefore gave himself an offering unto God for them; loved them, and therefore shed his precious blood for the remission of their sins, and washed them from them in it; loved them, and therefore is gone to prepare heaven and happiness for them, and will come again and take them to himself, that where he is, they may be also. Now, from persons of so much love, and who have given such strong proofs of it, what may not be expected? And which may be still further concluded,

3. From the gifts of grace, bestowed as the fruits of such love: and hath given us everlasting consolation; God is the God of comfort, and all true comfort springs from him; Christ is the consolation of Israel,

and if there is any real, solid comfort, it is in him, and comes by him, through his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; and which is applied by the holy Spirit, through the word and ordinances, which are breasts of consolation; and by the ministers of the gospel, who are Barnabases, sons of comfort; and miserable comforters are all others that attempt to comfort in another way.

And whatever comfort is had in this way, is a pure gift of God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ; it is what men are undeserving of, and therefore the least measure of it should not be reckoned small; because those that share it are by nature children of wrath, as others: and though this, as to sensible enjoyment, dots not always continue, but is interrupted through the prevalence of corruptions, the violence of Satan's temptations, and through divine desertions; yet the foundation of it is always, and is everlasting, as the everlasting love of God; and therefore the elect are not, and cannot be consumed; the everlasting covenant of grace, which yields the heirs of promise strong consolation; the everlasting righteousness of Christ, by which being justified, they have peace with God; and everlasting salvation by him, and therefore shall be saved from wrath to come; and both Christ and the holy Spirit, the other comforter, always abide, and are the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever: and besides, as the spiritual joy of believers is what no man can take away from them, so it eventually issues in everlasting consolation, without any interruption in the future state; when the redeemed shall be come to Zion, they shall have everlasting joy on their heads, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. The other gift is good hope through grace; and since God and Christ have bestowed such high favors upon the saints, it may be reasonably thought, that they will go on to comfort their hearts, and establish them. And this clause in the text being what our deceased friend pointed at, and laid the emphasis upon, I shall a little more largely insist upon it, and do the following things.

First, I shall give some account of the nature of the grace of hope. Secondly, Shew the original of it, that it is of God, and a gift of his. Thirdly, Explain in what sense it is through grace.

Fourthly, Make it appear that such an hope is a good one.

First, I shall give some account of the nature of

the grace of hope; and which may be learnt in a good measure from the things with which it is conversant. And,

1st, It is of things unseen. An object seen and enjoyed leaves no room for the exercise of hope about it; wherefore the apostle says, hope that is seen is not hope (Rom. 8:24, 25); that is, what is seen and enjoyed is not the object of hope; and hope can be no longer conversant with it, since it is in actual possession; concerning which the same inspired writer in the same place thus strongly reasons; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? but if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Christ is the object of our hope, and he is unseen by us, with our bodily eyes, is only seen by faith; he is gone to heaven, and is at the Father's right hand, out of our sight; but we hope and believe that he will come again and receive us to himself; and therefore we expect him our Saviour from heaven, to raise our bodies, and change them, and make them like his own, and to reunite them to our souls, and give us perfect happiness with him: the glories of the future state we are hoping for, are unseen realities; what eye has not seen, nor ear heard; eternal things we are looking at by Faith, and which are a support under present afflictions, are invisible; they are within the vail, into which faith enters, and gives a glimpse of; and hope follows, and waits for a clear light and full enjoyment of.

2dly, It is of things future, things to come: present things are not the object of hope; for what are present with us, we no more hope about; we and hope ceases, which was exercised concerning them when at a distance: nor have them, are the things of this present life the only objects of hope; for if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable (1 Cor. 15:19).

Our hope indeed has to do with future things in the present life; we hope for more communion with God and Christ in ordinances, and therefore wait patiently in them; we hope for further supplies of grace out of the fullness that is in Christ, and therefore wait upon him and for him; we gird up the loins of our minds, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Christ: our hope reaches beyond the grave, to a future state in another world; to the resurrection of our bodies; to our standing at the right hand of Christ; to our being justified before

men and angels; to our receiving the crown of life and glory; to our admission into the everlasting kingdom; and to our being with Christ for evermore, and being like him, and seeing him as he is. The things we are hoping for are laid up for us to be enjoyed hereafter; we have here some pledges and foretastes now, but the main is yet to come; and therefore we keep looking for it: faith only gives those things we are hoping for a kind of subsistence, and realizes them to us; and therefore it is said to be the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen (Heb. 11:1).

3dly, It is of things difficult to be obtained, as future salvation is; for though the righteous are certainly fared, yet scarcely (1 Pet. 4:18) that is, with difficulty; by reason of the many corruptions, temptations, and snares in the way; and particularly by reason of afflictions, reproaches, and persecutions for Christ's sake: they come to the enjoyment of it through a strait gate and a narrow way, through many tribulations and sorrows; and there try and exercise hope. And yet,

4thly, It is of things possible; or otherwise there would be no room, nor reason for hope; nothing but black despair would ensue, and a resolution to lay aside all thoughts about our happiness in another world, and to take the swing in carnal lusts and pleasures; saying, there is no hope, but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart (Jer. 18:12). But eternal glory and happiness being what God has prepared and promised, what is to be had through Christ, and that by sinners, even the chief of them, there is hope in Israel concerning this thing (Ezra 10:2); and the least encouragement given to a sensible sinner, hope lays hold upon; and it improves every hint and circumstance to its own advantage; such a soul putteth his mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope (Lam. 3:29); and as the possibility and probability of happiness appear to him, so in proportion his hope rises.

5thly, It is of things certain, which have a real being, and which are solid and substantial; and which not only faith is the substance of, but they are really laid up in heaven, are in the hands of Christ, and shall certainly be enjoyed; and of which the hoping Christian has no reason to doubt: and there is not only a certainty in the object of hope, but there is such a firmness and stability in the grace itself, that the soul

in the lively exercise of it rejoices in hope of the glory of God; and which is so sure unto him, that he is even said to be already saved by hope (Romans 8:24).

6thly, True hope is always attended with faith: these two graces go together; where the one is the other is; they are wrought by the same hand, and at the same time, in regeneration; and are more or less exercised together; though the one may be at some times more visible in its exercise than the other; and there may be hope when faith is scarcely discernible; yet faith is at the bottom, and is the substance of things hoped for; and without which there would be no hope; and some of the acts of these graces are so similar, so much like to one another, that they are scarcely to be discerned and distinguished from each other; and therefore are put for one another: So what is called trusting in Christ, Ephesians 1:12 is in the Greek text hoping in Christ; and these two are joined together in Jeremiah 17:7. I proceed,

Secondly, To shew the original of this grace, that it is of God, and a gift of his; for this clause, and good hope through grace, is in connection with the words preceding, and our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which — hath given both everlasting comfort and good hope. As faith, so hope, is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God; and what is said of the one is true of the other, that all men have it not (Eph. 2:8; 2 Thess. 3:2). Hope is not to be found naturally in men; nor is it in any natural man, in a man that is in a state of unregeneracy; such may express it, but not experience it; it is too commonly and too profanely said, “As I hope to be saved;” when such who use the phrase know not what a good hope through grace is; it is the character of God’s own people before conversion, that they are without hope, as well as without God and Christ in the world (Eph. 2:12): This is a grace which is wrought in the soul in regeneration by the Spirit of God, and is one of his fruits; it is implanted by him, and grows up under his influence; it is through him believers wait for the hope of righteousness by faith; and it is through his power they abound in the exercise of it: No man has it till he is born again; for he is, of abounding grace, begotten to it: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (1 Pet. 1:3);

by which it appears, as well as from our text, that God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ have a concern in the production of a good and lively hope; that it is owing to the abundant mercy of the one, and the resurrection of the other, who was raised and glorified that our faith and hope might be in God (1 Pet. 1:20) and that it is not until a man is regenerated; whatever hope he has before, is not a lively one, and so not a good one: The gospel is the ordinary means by which it is ingenerated, and therefore may be called the hope of the gospel (Col. 1:23); and certain it is, that the gospel being good news, and glad tidings of good things, of peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation by Christ, tends greatly to encourage and promote hope; its doctrines being doctrines of grace, and its promises being free, absolute, and unconditional, are calculated for this purport, and greatly serve it; from there the heirs of promise have strong consolation, who flee to Christ and lay hold on the hope set before them; the promises they are heirs of, and which yield them comfort, encourage their hope in Christ, who is set before them, in the gospel, as the object of it; and, generally speaking, it is a word of promise which the holy Spirit brings home and applies to the Soul, which is the ground and foundation of its hope: Hence says David, Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope (Ps. 119:49). Indeed whatsoever is written in the scriptures is written for our use, profit, and learning, that we through comfort of them might have hope (Rom. 15:4); and there are many things which, under a divine blessing, serve to cultivate and increase this grace; as the consideration of the power and faithfulness of God in his promises; the free grace and mercy of God displayed in salvation by Christ; the sufferings, death, resurrection, and intercession of Christ; and present experiences and a recollection of past ones; for experience worketh hope (Rom. 5:4): But then the cause, means, motives and encouragements of it, all shew it to be of the grace of God, and a gift of his. And which may further appear, by,

Thirdly, Explaining in what sense it is through grace. Grace is the spring and source of it; it comes to us from and through the grace of God; it is a part of that grace, which the God of all grace is the donor of; it is a part of the fullness of grace which is in Christ the Mediator, and is had of him; it is a part of that

grace which the spirit of grace operates, and is the author of in conversion. Grace also is the object of it. The words may be literally rendered from the original text, and good hope, *en caipp*, “in grace,” and so the phrase is the same with hoping in the mercy of God (Ps. 147:11): the mercy of God in Christ is the ground and foundation of hope; and is not only the motive and encouragement to it, let Israel hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy (Ps. 130:7); but is the thing itself, which hope is conversant with: the sensible sinner, or hoping Christian, hopes in the pardoning, justifying, and adopting grace of God, through Christ; he hopes that the good work of grace is begun in him; and he hopes and believes it will be performed until the day of Christ; he hopes for larger measures of grace from Christ, to enable him to do his will and work, to oppose his own corruptions, to withstand Satan’s temptations, and to discharge his duty to God and man; he hopes the grace of Christ will be sufficient for him, or that a sufficient supply of it will be given him, to carry him through all the trials and difficulties of life; he hopes that his covenant-God and Father will supply all his need out of his riches in glory by Christ, and that God will give him persevering grace to hold on and out unto the end; he hopes for grace to be brought to him at the appearance of Christ; and he hopes for glory, which is the perfection of grace. Moreover, a good hope through grace is an hope that is exercised through the grace of God; that is to say, that a man hopes for such and such things, and that he shall have them; not through any merits of his own, or through works of righteousness done by him, but through the grace and mercy of God. Thus for instance,

1st, Let the thing hoped for be salvation, as David says, Lord, I have hoped for thy salvation (Ps. 119:166): this the sensible soul knows is not by works, but by grace; and therefore he hopes for it, not through the one, but through the other: he is well assured that God saves and calls men, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace; that it is not by works of righteousness they have done they are saved, but according to the mercy of God through the blood of Christ, and washing of regeneration; and that they are saved by grace, and not merit, to prevent boasting in the creature; and therefore he hopes for it in this way, and in this only: and it is its being by grace

which encourages him to hope for it; for were it by works, he should for ever despair of obtaining it. He observes, that it is freely wrought out by Christ, who came into the world having salvation, and is become the author of it; that it is already done, Christ on the cross said, it is finished (John 19:38), and now he is on the throne, he says, it is done (Rev. 21:6), and so completely done, that nothing is wanting in it, nor can any thing be added to it; and therefore the man that is acquainted with all this, hopes for it through the grace of Christ, that has wrought it, without any works of his: he further observes, that Christ came to seek, and to save lost sinners; yea, that it is a truth to be depended on, and is worthy of his acceptation and the acceptation of others, that Christ came into the world to save the chief of sinners; and that the worst and vilest have been washed, cleansed, sanctified, and justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God; and therefore he hopes for salvation through the same grace and favor that has been shown to them, though he has been as bad as they, and may think himself worse; he takes notice that Christ is listed up in the ministry of the word, as the brazen serpent was listed up on the pole, that whoever, looks to him and believes on him should not perish, but have everlasting life; he is encouraged by the gospel-declaration that whoever believes in him shall be saved (Mark 16:16); and by the gospel instruction given to a sensible, sinner in his case, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved (Acts 16:31); which, he considers as wonderful displays of the grace of God in Christ through which he is enabled to hope in him.

2dly, Let it be the pardon of sin he is hoping for: As sin is the first thing the Spirit of God convinces a man of, it is the pardon of it that he in the first place seeks after; and when he understands the right way in which it is to be had, he hopes for it; not through his tears, humiliations, and repentance, but through the grace of God streaming in the blood of Jesus: He finds that God only can forgive sin, against whom it is committed; that this is his sole prerogative, which he exercises, in a free and sovereign manner; that he has promised, in covenant to his people, that he will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will he remember, no more (Heb. 8:12); that he has proclaimed his name in his gospel, a God pardoning iniquity, transgression and

sin (Ex. 34:6, 7); and that there is none like him on that account; and therefore he is greatly encouraged to turn to the Lord, who will abundantly pardon, and to hope in his mercy: He understands by the sacred writings, that God set forth his Son to be the propitiation for sin; and that he sent him forth, in the fullness of time to shed his blood for the remission of it, there being no remission without shedding of blood; and that he has exalted him at his right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and forgiveness of sins; and therefore he hopes for it through, him, seeing with him there is mercy and plenteous redemption: And though he observes that forgiveness of sin is through the blood of Christ, yet according to the riches of divine grace, and comes through the tender mercy of our God; and therefore he hopes for it, not according to his own merit, but according to the multitude of God's tender mercies. The gospel declaration, that whosoever believes in Christ, shall receive remission of sins (Acts 10:43) and the many instances of pardoning grace and mercy, even such that have been great sinners, and whole sins were attended with aggravated circumstances; as David, who was guilty of murder and adultery; Manasseh, of most abominable crimes; Peter, of denying his Lord and Master; Saul, the persecutor, the blasphemer, and the injurious person, and the notorious sinner spoken of, who loved much because much was forgiven her; all these engage to the exercise of hope for pardon, through the free grace and mercy of God.

3dly, Let it be eternal life which is the thing hoped for, as that is; in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lye, promised before the world began, says the apostle (Titus 1:2); hence, eternal glory and happiness being the object, of hope, is called the blessed hope, and the hope which is laid up in heaven (Titus 2:13; Col. 1:5). Now, eternal life is the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord; it is that kingdom which it is our heavenly Father's good pleasure to give unto his children; it is what he of his rich grace, has prepared for them, and promised to them, calls them unto, makes them meet for, and bestows upon them: Not only the promise of eternal life, but that itself is put into Christ's hands for them; and he has power to give it to as many as the Father has given him; and to them he does give it, and they shall never perish: And since it is a gift of pure free grace, therefore do sensible

sinners, seeking for glory, immortality, and eternal life, hope for it; which they could, never expect upon any other foot: And they are the rather encouraged to hope for it, since God has declared it to be his will, that whoever sees the Son, and believes on him, shall have it; and be cause they find the holy Spirit of God is at work upon their, hearts, has begun the good work, which he will finish, and is working them up for that self-same thing, eternal life and happiness; wherefore they reason as Manoah's wife did, that "if the Lord were pleased to destroy them, he would never have shewed them and told them such things as he has done, or wrought such things in them;" and hence for grace and through grace they hope for glory; seeing to whom God gives grace, he gives glory; these are inseparably connected together; whom he calls and justifies, them he also glorifies, And,

Fourthly, Such an hope is a good one, There is a bad hope and there is a good one. There is the hope of the worldly man, who makes gold his hope, and says to the fine gold, thou art my confidence (Rom. 15:13); he puts his trust in it; and not only places his dependence on it for present and future good in this life, but hopes for eternal life upon the account of it; imagining there is none the King of kings will delight to honour in the world as himself, who enjoys so large a portion of this; this is a bad hope. There is the hope of the man that is only upon principles in which he has been brought up; who hopes upon the faith of others, his natural descent, or being born of such and such parents, and his religious education; this is a bad hope. There is the hope of the moralist and legalist; who hopes he shall inherit eternal life because of the good things he has done; because of his moral life and actions, and his works of righteousness in obedience to the law; whereas by there no man can be justified, and so not saved, or ever enter into the kingdom of heaven; this is a bad hope. There is the hope of the hypocrite, who hopes for heaven because of his profession of religion and subjection to ordinances, and going through a round of duties in a formal manner, and with a mere outward show; this is a bad hope; it is like the spider's web, and will be as the giving up of the Ghost, and be of no avail; even though such may have gained a name among men to be holy and good, when God takes away their souls. And there is the hope of the profane sinner, for such have their hope; and they hope for

salvation through the absolute mercy of God; they fancy if they have but time to say at last, "Lord have mercy on us," all will be well; this is a bad hope; for there is no mercy for sinners, but through the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ. But the hope we have been treating of is a good one, and may be so called,

1st, Because it is laid upon a good foundation; not upon the absolute mercy of God; not upon the merit of the creature; not upon any outward acts of righteousness; not upon civility, morality, or an external profession of religion; all which are sandy foundations to build an hope of eternal happiness upon; but upon the person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ; upon the person of Christ, who is God over all blessed for ever, and is able to save to the uttermost, who is the hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble, and Christ our hope, and in us the hope of glory; upon his blood, which cleanses from all sin, and was shed for the remission of it; upon his righteousness, which justifies from all sin, and gives a right and title to eternal life; and upon his sacrifice, by which sin is finished and made an end of, and reconciliation is made for it.

2dly, Because not only the author of it is good, who from it is called the God of hope (Rom. 15:13), but because the objects of it are good things; it is of good things to come, and the best things are referred till last; now the saints have their evil things, their sorrows and afflictions, but hereafter they shall have their good things. Christ is come an high priest of good things to come unto his people; and there good things are laid up for them, and shall be enjoyed by them; and hope is waiting for them: And the hoping Christian knows them to be good by the foretastes and pledges he has had of them; such as a sight of God in Christ; communion with Father, Son, and Spirit; fellowship with angels and glorified saints; perfect knowledge, holiness, and pleasure.

3dly, Because it is in its nature and effects good: It is called a lively hope, or a living one (1 Pet. 1:3); because it has not only for its subject a living man in a spiritual sense; and for its foundation, not dead works, but a living Christ; and for its object, eternal life; but because it is of a quickening, exhilarating, and cheering nature; and because it is attended with living works of righteousness; for as faith without works

is dead, so is hope likewise; and because it always continues, and is sometimes in lively exercise, when other graces are not so lively: It is also said to be of a purifying nature; every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as he is pure (1 John 3:3); and which it no other ways does than as it deals with the pure and spotless righteousness of Christ, and with his precious blood, which purges the conscience from dead works.

4thly, Because of its great usefulness: It is that to the soul an anchor is to a ship when becalmed, or in danger through rocks and shoals; it preserves and keeps it steady; and is therefore said to be as an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast (Heb. 6:19). And it serves the same use and purpose as an helmet does to the head; and therefore the hope of salvation is said to be for an helmet (1 Thess. 5:8); this grace preserves the head and heart of a Christian from bad principles in perilous times; for he can give into none that strike at the foundation of his hope; it is an erector of his head, and keeps it above water in times of trouble, inward and outward; and it covers his head in the day of battle, between him and his spiritual enemies; this he will never give up, This grace is of singular use under afflictive dispensations, of providence; the believer-rejoices, in hope of the glory of God, even in tribulations; knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed: because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the holy Ghost, which is given unto us (Rom. 5:2-5), And it is of eminent service in the hour of death; for when the wicked is driven away in his wickedness, like a beast to hell, the righteous hath hope in his death (Prov. 14:32); of tiring again at the last day, and in the mean while of being in the arms of Jesus, and of being happy with him; and therefore can look upon death and eternity with pleasure. Yea, this grace is of so much importance and usefulness, that even salvation is ascribed unto it, we are saved by hope (Rom. 8:24); not by it, as the efficient cause of salvation, for there is no other author or efficient cause of salvation but Christ; but by it as a means of coming to, and enjoying the salvation Christ has wrought out: As we are saved by Grace through faith, in like manner we are saved through hope; being begotten unto it, we are kept through it, till we receive the end of it, the salvation of

our souls; wherefore upon the whole, it must be good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord (Lam. 3:26).

There is a sort of people risen up among us of late, who sneer at this phrase, a good hope through grace, not considering that it is a scriptural one; and represent such who have attained to nothing higher, as in the lower form and class of Christians, if they deserve that name; and suggest, that persons may have this and everlastingly perish: but let us not regard what these flighty people say;

let us attend to what the scriptures say, to what our text says concerning it; which speaks of it as of God, as a gift of his; ascribes it to his grace, represents it as a fruit of the love of God and Christ; joins it with everlasting consolation; and mentions it as a blessing of grace, which the apostles themselves, whom God had set in the first place in the church, in the highest office in it, were possessed of, and were thankful for: Let us attend to what a solid saint on a dying bed says of a good hope through grace; what his sentiments, his notions of it are; and such an one, I mean a solid saint, was our deceased friend, whose death is the occasion of this discourse; as must be allowed by all that knew him, who are capable of judging of a spiritual man.

At my first visit to him after he had took to his bed, upon inquiring into the spiritual estate and frame of his soul, he told me, he had a good hope through grace; and added, if I may but go out of the world with a good hope through grace, it will be more to me than all the exaltations and joys some persons speak of; that is enough, I am content, or words to this purpose; and subjoined, that if any thing should be said of him after his decease, meaning in this public way, he desired it might be from this passage of scripture, we have been considering. It pleased God to favor him with a religious education, to bless him with an early conversion, and to cast him betimes under a gospel ministry; by which means his judgment was formed, fixed, and established in gospel principles, in the doctrines of grace, of which he had a clear discerning: And as he had a retentive memory, he treasured up in it the quintessence and flower of gospel discourses, and the pithy sayings and sententious expressions he had heard or read in them; which, together with that large stock and fund of gracious experience of the love of God to his own soul, abundantly furnished him

with rich materials for spiritual discourse; and which made his conversation very pleasant, profitable, and instructive; he being able to speak of divine things in very apt words, with great freedom, propriety, and pertinence. The frame of his soul was generally spiritual and heavenly, and so habituated he was to spiritual things, and so much given to the contemplation of them, and meditation upon them, that in the midst of worldly business, and even upon the Exchange, when he met with a proper person, would at once enter into a Christian conversation about such things, which lay warm upon his heart, he had been lately hearing or meditating upon; which shows the bias and bent of his mind. And as he was indulged with a large measure of grace, so he had great afflictions to try and exercise that grace; which afflictions he bore with uncommon patience seldom making mention of them, especially in a way of complaint; and never murmuring at the dispensations of God; but taking all kindly at his hand, as coming from a loving Father, and designed and overruled for his spiritual good, profit, and advantage. He was remarkable for his humility, he was clothed with it, that ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. His outward conversation in the world was exemplary, and as became the gospel of Christ, and was ornamental to it. He was many years a worshipper with us in this assembly; but became a member of this church but of late: We promised ourselves a great deal of usefulness from him in our church-state; but God has took him away, and he is joined to better company, and is employed in higher service: he was very comfortable in his soul, throughout his last illness; his faith was kept steady, ever looking to Jesus, in whom he knew all his salvation lay. He has left to you, his dear children, a shining example both in civil and religious life; may you tread in his steps; let it be your great concern to know your father's God, to worship, fear, and follow him; so he who has been his God, will shew himself to be yours, and be your God and guide even unto death. May we all learn something from this providence, and from this discourse, occasioned by it; and it becomes us,

1. To inquire whether, we have any hope of good things to come, and what that hope is; whether it be a good one or a bad one. If it is founded on any thing short of Christ, it is a bad one; if it is upon the

Creature and creature, any it will be of no avail; if it is through works, and not through grace, we hope for heaven and happiness, it will prove a vain hope: But if it is founded upon what Christ is unto us; what he has done for us; and what he is in us; it is a good one, and will answer some good purposes in life and death: And then if we are satisfied we have such an hope, it becomes us,

2. To bless God for it; since he is the donor and author of it. It is not of ourselves; it is the gift of God; and we should ascribe it not to nature, nor to the reasonings of our minds, the power and freedom of our wills but to the grace of God: We might have been left to black despair, and to sink into hell under the weight of guilt; there might have been nothing but a fearful looking for of wrath and fiery indignation, which our sins deferred; but God has dealt graciously with us, he has given us a good hope through grace, Wherefore it becomes us,

3. To continue in the use of this grace; to pray for the holy Spirit of God to cause us to abound in it; and to enable us to hold fast the rejoicing of it firm unto the end; to gird up the loins of our minds, and hope for future grace and eternal glory; and to go on hoping, believing, loving, until hope is exchanged for fruition, faith for vision, and love is in its highest exercise.

The Free Grace Of God Exalted In The Character Of The Apostle Paul

Occasioned by the Death of Mr. John Brine, Baptist Minister. Preached at St. Albans, Hertfordshire,

May 26, 1765.

But by the grace of God, I am what I am. —1 Corinthians 15:10

The apostle is treating in the context of the important doctrine of the resurrection of Christ from the dead: he asserts, that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures, which foretold he should rise, and as in fact he did; of this he produces ocular testimonies, as that “he was seen after his resurrection of Cephas, that is, Peter, and then of the twelve apostles; next of above five hundred brethren at once; after that of James, then of all the apostles; and last of all he was seen by himself.”

And it seems by his own account, that he was seen by him more than once; as at his conversion, when a light shone around him, and he not only heard the voice of Christ, but he appeared to him, and made him

a minister and witness of what he saw and heard, and of what should hereafter be made known unto him; nor was he, as he says, disobedient to the heavenly vision (Acts 26:16, 19); when he was “caught up into the third heaven, and heard and saw things unspeakable, and not lawful to be uttered;” Which might be at the time of his conversion also: he doubtless had a sight of Christ in his human nature, as risen and ascended to heaven; and after all this, when he was come to Jerusalem again, and was praying in the temple, he fell into a trance; and, says he, I saw him (Acts 22:17, 18), meaning Christ, as well as heard the commission, instructions, and directions, he gave him; when he was as one born out of due time; which is not to be understood of him literally and in a natural sense, as if he was born before his time, of which we have no where any intimation, but figuratively: and the allusion is either, as some think, to a posthumous birth, the birth of one after the death of his father, to which there was something similar in the apostle’s case. The rest of the apostles were called unto and invested with the office of an apostle whilst Christ, their everlasting Father, was here on earth; but the apostle was invested with it after his death, and resurrection from the dead: or rather, the allusion is to an abortive or untimely birth, which has never seen the sun, nor known any thing; and is not known, has no name, and is of no account: this figurative phrase is explained by what follows, for I am the least of the apostles; and it is no wonder that he should call himself the least of the apostles, when he elsewhere says, that he was less than the least of all saints (Eph. 3:8); for if less than the least of all saints, he must be the least

of the apostles; though, when he was traduced by the false teachers, and his character impeached, and the gospel and interest of Christ were like to suffer by those means, he exerted himself and magnified his office; and asserted, that he was not a whit behind the very chiefest of the apostles (2 Cor. 11:5; 12:11); though he here adds, that am not meet to be called an apostle; as indeed no one was; none are meet or deserving of themselves to be members of gospel-churches, to have a place and a name there better than that of sons and daughters; nor to be ordinary ministers of the word, and still less to be the apostles of Jesus Christ. The reason given why he entertained such low and mean thoughts of himself, is, because,

says he, I persecuted the church of God; of which, much notice is taken by the divine historian, that the grace of God in the conversion of the apostle, might be set off with a greater foil; it is observed that "the clothes of those that stoned Stephen were laid at his feet to be kept by him; that he was consenting to the death of Stephen; that he made havoc of the church, haling men and women to prison; that he breathed out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of Christ, and desired and took letters of the high priest, empowering him to take up any at Damascus he found in the Christian way, and to bring them to Jerusalem;" (Acts 7:58; 8:1, 3; 9:1, 2) and, according to his own account, he gave his voice against them, when put to death, punished them in every synagogue; compelled them to blaspheme, and persecuted them to strange cities, being exceeding mad against them (Acts 26:10, 11).

Now the sense of all this evil dwelt upon his mind, remained with him, and kept him humble all his days, amidst all his grace, gifts, attainments and usefulness. So every saint has something or other to keep him humble, indwelling sin, or Satan's temptations, or afflictions in the world; and then follow the words first read, but by the grace of God I am what I am; be I what I am, greater or lesser, as a man, a saint, a minister, and an apostle, I am just such an one as it is the will of God I should be; by his grace I am what I am. Two things I observe from hence:

I. That the apostle was something, not a mere non-entity, he had a being, and was in some circumstances; which is supposed and implied in the phrase, I am what I am.

II. That be that something he was, what it may, that he was by the grace of God.

I. That the apostle was something; he had an existence and was in circumstances, on many accounts, not mean and despicable. There is a sense indeed in which he was nothing, and which he himself observes, though I be nothing (2 Cor. 12:11); not absolutely, he was a man, had the integral parts of a man, a body and a soul; a body consisting of flesh, blood and bones; and though of the earth earthly, sprung out of the dust, and would return to dust: again, yet was something, and would be even in that state; for dust is something: and besides he had a rational soul, possessed of intellectual powers and faculties; a spirit

immaterial and immortal, and of more worth than a world; for what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? (Matthew 16:16).

But in a comparative sense he was nothing, that is, when compared with God, the everlasting I AM, the fountain of being, the Being of beings: so some things in comparison of others that are greatly more excellent, are represented as non-entities; thus earthly riches, when compared with the durable, solid and substantial riches of grace and glory, are said to be that which is not (Prov. 23:6); in like manner, the duration of a creature, in comparison of the eternity of God, is nothing. Mine age, says David, is as nothing before thee (Ps. 39:5); not to be mentioned with his days and years, which are throughout all generations and without beginning; men of the greatest name and figure are not to be spoken of with him; and not only single individuals, but even all nations before him are as nothing; and could there be any thing less than nothing, they would be that; they are counted to him less than nothing and vanity (Isa. 40:17).

Moreover the apostle was nothing, of no account and esteem with the men of the world, particularly with the false teachers; with respect to whom he says, what has been before referred to, though I be nothing; that is, in the opinion of the false teachers, who vilified him, and endeavored to make him contemptible in the eyes of others; and which is not to be wondered at, since Christ himself was despised and rejected of men, or ceased from being a man, from being reckoned in the class of men, a worm, and no man, in their esteem; and so all his followers are accounted as the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things. Add to this, that the apostle was nothing in his own eyes; he reckoned himself the chief of sinners, and less than the least of all saints; and, generally speaking, those that have the most grace and the greatest gifts, and are of the greatest usefulness, are the most humble, and think the most meanly of themselves. So those boughs and branches of trees, that are most richly laden with fruit, bend downwards, and hang lowest.

But notwithstanding all this, the apostle was something, I am what I am; not as the false teachers, and vain boasters of their knowledge and gifts, who, thought they were something when they were nothing; and fancied they knew something, when

they knew nothing as they ought to know; not like Simon Magus, who gave out that himself was some great one (Acts 8:9); had great knowledge of things, had great power, and could do great and wonderful feats, when he was nothing; nothing in grace, for notwithstanding his profession of faith, he was in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity; nothing in knowledge of divine things, he knew nothing spiritually and experimentally; nor in gifts, and therefore offered money that he might be possessed of the gifts of the Spirit, and of power to confer them on others: but our apostle was something in grace; there was a principle of grace and holiness in him, and an abundance of grace bestowed on him; there was some good thing in him towards the Lord God of Israel; the root of the matter was in him; he was no sounding brass, nor tinkling cymbal. He was something in knowledge, divine, spiritual, and evangelical; he knew much of the person, offices and grace of Christ; of the mysteries of grace, and doctrines of the gospel; perhaps more than any mere man besides himself ever did: ye may understand, says he, my knowledge in the mystery of Christ (Eph.3:4); and, which was very great: he was something in gifts, he was endued with extraordinary gifts; in nothing, in no gift was he behind the very chiefest apostles; truly the signs of an apostle were wrought by him every where, in wonders and mighty deeds (2 Cor. 12:11, 12); and was of more extensive usefulness in preaching the Gospel, converting sinners, and planting churches, than any other whatever. I will not dare, says he, to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient by word and deed, through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God (Rom. 15:18, 19).

He was also something, and very high indeed, in the esteem and account of God and Christ; he was a chosen vessel to bear his name before the Gentiles (Acts 9:15): and so all Christ's faithful ministers, on whom he has bestowed gifts and grace, and makes more or less useful, are something in his account; they are held as stars in his right hand: and indeed all his people are precious in his sight; his Hephzibah in whom he delights, his Beulah to whom he is married, his jewels, his peculiar treasure, his portion, and the lot of his inheritance.

II. Let that something the apostle was be what it

may, that he was by the grace of God; that is, by the good-will and pleasure of God; in which sense this phrase is often to be understood, both in the Old and in the New Testament: when Noah is said to find grace in the eyes of the Lord (Gen. 6:8); the meaning is, that he enjoyed the free favor and good-will of God, and was well-pleasing and acceptable in his sight; and whatever distinguishing blessing he had, he had it through the grace and good-will of God, and not through any merits of his own: and so in the New Testament, whenever salvation, and the several parts of it, are ascribed to the grace of God, as, by grace ye are saved (Eph. 2:8), and the like, it is always to be understood of the unmerited favor and sovereign will and good pleasure of God; and in this sense are we to understand it here. And for the farther illustration of it, I shall endeavor to shew that what the apostle was, and so what any other man is, as a man, as a minister, and as a saint, that they are by the grace and favor of God.

First, What the apostle was as a man, was owing to the good-will and pleasure of God. And so is what any man is as such. God gives life and breath and being to all his creatures; thou hast granted me life and favor (Job 10:12), says Job; to have life and being in this world, is owing to a grant from God; and that grant is a favor, owing to the good-will and pleasure of God: the spirit of God has made me, says one of Job's friends, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life (Job 33:4); life, in the first spring of it, is a gift of God; and the continuance of it depends on his will and pleasure: his visitation preserves the spirits of men; he upholds their souls in life; in him they live, move, and have their being; and whether their continuance in life is longer or shorter, it is just as his sovereign will and pleasure is; it is through his good hand upon them, that they remain in being in this world so long as they do. All the mercies of life are from God; hence he is called, the father of mercies (2 Cor. 1:3): and there are many and various, and are continually repeated; they are new every morning, and continue all the day, and are renewed every day; and having food and raiment, we should not only be therewith content, but be thankful for them; since, as good old Jacob says, we are not worthy of the least of all the mercies shewed us; not of the least morsel of bread we eat, nor of the clothes we wear: and how sensible of the divine goodness was

that patriarch to the last; and how thankful for it? The God that fed me all my life long until this day — bless the lads (Gen. 32:10).

Some have a greater affluence of the good things of this life than others; more they have than they can make use of themselves, and which are given them for the relief of others; these are wisdom's left-hand-blessings. When David and his princes offered to largely and so willingly towards the building of the temple, he acknowledges it was all of God, both the ability and the willing mind; Riches and honour come of thee—Who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort! For all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee! (1 Chron. 29:13, 14).

Riches are the property of God, he gives and takes them away at his pleasure, and this he does to shew his sovereignty; he made Job the greatest man in all the east for wealth and worldly substance, and in one day stripped him of it all; The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away (Job 1:3, 21); it is all according to his good pleasure. All the endowments of the mind, the natural parts and abilities of men, their intellectual and reasoning powers and faculties, are of God; There is a spirit in man, a rational spirit, and that is of God, a gift of his to men: The inspiration of the almighty, giveth them understanding (Job 32:8); which distinguishes men from brutes, and gives them the pre-eminence to them; for God is he, who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven (Job 35:11).

Now whatever the apostle had of this kind, as well as of other things, it was through the favor and good-will of God: as he certainly was a man of great natural abilities, of strong reasoning powers, his enemies themselves being witnesses; his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful (2 Cor. 10:10); written in a masculine style, and full of strong nervous reasonings and arguments, they were not able to answer.

Secondly, What he was as a minister and an apostle, was through the favor and good-will of God; he did not become one of himself, through his own attainments, or by any merits of his; for he before says, he was not meet to be called an Apostle; nor was he made a minister of the gospel, or an apostle, by man; this he disavows: Paul an apostle, not of man, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father; the

commission and qualifications he had as such, were not of men, but of God; the gospel he preached, the doctrines of it he delivered, and the instructions he had for that purpose, were not after men, neither received he them of men, nor was he taught them but by the revelation of Jesus Christ (Gal. 1:1, 11, 12): it was not owing to his education, to his being brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, and instructed in all the learning of those times, which qualified him for a minister of the word; this served only to make him a keener adversary, and a more bitter enemy to Christ and his gospel. Whenever he speaks of his being put into the ministry, he attributes it to the grace and favor of God; making mention of the gospel, he adds, whereof I was made a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given unto ME, by the effectual working of his power: unto ME, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given; that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ (Eph. 3:7, 8): and that he was an extraordinary minister; an apostle of Christ, he ascribes to the grace of God; by whom we have received grace and apostleship (Rom. 1:5); that is, grace to make us apostles, and to qualify for that office, and ordinary ministers of the word become such through gifts, which Christ, their ascended Lord and King, has received for men, and gives to men; and which gifts are of grace and free favor dispensed to whomsoever he pleases; to some more, and others less, but all of grace: having gifts differing according to the grace that is given us; whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith (Rom. 12:6): and again, as every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God (1 Pet. 4:10); so that whatever any one is as a minister of the word, he is so by the gift of grace, by the free grace and favor of God, Thirdly, What the apostle was as a saint, he was by the grace of God, as every saint is; what distinguishes a saint from a sinner, or one man from another, is entirely owing to the grace and free favor of God.

1. Was the apostle a chosen vessel, not only to preach the gospel, but chosen to grace here and glory hereafter, as he undoubtedly was; he often puts himself among the chosen ones; thus, speaking of the vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory, he adds, by way of explanation, even us whom he hath called (Rom.

9:24); and in another place, according as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love (Eph. 1:4): this he was by the grace of God, as all the chosen ones be; for they are chosen, not for any good works done by them, or foreseen to be done by them; for the act of election passed before any were done by them, and without respect to any; for the children not being yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth (Rom. 9:11): besides good works are the fruits and effects of election, and therefore cannot be the cause of it; we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them (Eph. 2:10): to which add, that they are the evidences of election unto others; hence that exhortation of the apostle, give diligence to make your calling and election sure (2 Pet. 1:10); not election by calling, though the latter is an evidence of the former, since both are to be made sure; and therefore must be by some third thing, and that is good works; by which there are made not sure in themselves; nor sure to the saints, but to the world; which give to them a certain evidence that the saints are, what they profess to be, the chosen and called of God; and is the best evidence they are capable of giving to the world of those things, and of their receiving from them.

Nor is it owing to the holiness of men, either internal or external, that any are chosen to eternal life. Men are chosen, not because they are holy, but that they should be holy and without blame; they are chosen not for, but through sanctification of the spirit (Eph. 1:4); they are chosen to it as an end, and through it as a mean, and it is insured by election. And so far is this doctrine from being a licentious one, as it is ignorantly traduced by some, that it is the source and spring of all real holiness that has been in the world since the fall of Adam; had not God referred to himself a remnant according to the election of grace, the whole world had been as Sodom and Gomorrah, both for sin and for punishment; there would have been no such thing as holiness among the sons of Adam. Nor is the choice of men owing to their faith; they are chosen not for their belief, but through the belief of the truth, through faith in Christ, the Way,

the Truth and the Life: faith is the fruit and effect of election, and is secured, and ascertained by it; as many as were ordained unto eternal life believed (Acts 8:48); hence faith, is called the faith of God's elect (Titus 1:1), because it is a consequent of their election, and is peculiar to them. It remains that men are what they are, as chosen ones, not by any thing of theirs, but by the grace, favor, and good-will of God; hence this act of God is called the election of grace, on which the apostle argues in this strong and nervous manner; if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace—for grace is not grace, unless it is altogether free; but if it be of works, then it is no more grace; otherwise work is no more work (Rom. 11:5, 6); to blend and confound them together, is to destroy the nature and use of both.

2. Was the apostle an adopted sort of God? this he was by the grace of God; which is the next spiritual blessing that follows election, in that famous first chapter of the epistle to the Ephesians; and where the apostle ranks himself among those that are predestinated to the adoption of children, and which he ascribes to the good will and pleasure of God; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will (Eph. 1:5).

None are the children of God through any merits of their own, for they are by nature children of wrath, as others (Eph. 2:3); there is no reason or motive in them that should move the Lord to put them among the children; it need not be wondered at to hear him say, how shall I put thee among the children, so unlovely, so unworthy! but it is amazing what follows, thou shalt call me my Father, and not turn away from me (Jer. 3:19). In civil adoption there is commonly something in the adopted, or relative to it, that induces the adopter to take the step he does; there are but two instances of this kind in scripture, I think, and they both suggest something of this nature; the one is the adoption of Moses by Pharaoh's daughter, of whom it is said, that he was a goodly child, exceeding fair and lovely to look upon, which attracted the affections of the princess, as well as its case and circumstances moved her compassion; the other is the adoption of Esther by Mordecai, of whom it is remarked, that the maid was fair and beautiful, and besides was a relation of Mordecai; but in the case of divine adoption, there is

nothing lovely and amiable in the adopted, but all the reverse, like the wretched infant cast out in the open field to the loathing of its person in the day it was born (Ezek. 16:5); wherefore the apostle John breaks forth in this pathetic manner, in the view of this amazing blessing; Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God! (1 John 3:4), it is by the unmerited love, free favor and good-will of God, that saints are what they are in this sense; by the grace of God in predestination to this blessing, which, as before observed, is according to the good pleasure of his will; by the grace of God in the covenant, which is a covenant of grace, ordered in all things and sure, full of all spiritual blessings, called the sure mercies of David, because they flow from the grace, mercy, and favor of God in Christ; in which this blessing of grace, adoption, is provided and secured; and which runs thus, without any condition required; I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty (2 Cor. 6:18): it is also by and through the grace of Christ, who has redeemed his that were under the law, that they might receive the adoption of children (Gal. 4:5), as a free-grace-gift; and to as many as receive him, that is, believe in him, he gives power, right and privilege, to become the sons of God (John 1:12); and it is by the grace of the Spirit that this blessing is manifested, applied, and bore witness to, who is therefore called the Spirit of adoption. (Rom. 8:15).

3. Was the apostle redeemed by Christ? as without doubt he was, and he had the faith of assurance of interest in this blessing of redemption; which stands next in order to election and adoption, in the above mentioned chapter, and where the apostle puts himself among the redeemed ones, in whom we have redemption through his blood (Eph. 1:7); this he was by the grace of God; for though redemption is by the blood of Christ, it is according to the riches of God's grace; though it cost Christ dear, his blood and life, it is free to the redeemed; it is without money and without price to them; it was the free grace of God that provided Christ to be the Redeemer and Saviour, called him to this work, appointed him to do it, and promised him as such; it was owing to the grace of God that he was sent in the fullness of time to redeem men; at his incarnation, the first step to it, the angels sung, peace on earth, good-will to men (Luke 2:14); the

love, grace, favor and good-will of God, are in a most wonderful manner displayed in the mission of Christ to obtain redemption for men. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that is, to be the Saviour of men; in this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him; herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins (John 3:16; 1 John 4:9, 10); it is owing to the grace, favor and good-will of God to men, that Christ was delivered up for them, into the hands of justice and death; it was by the grace of God he tasted death for every man (Heb. 2:9); that is, suffered death for every one of the sons he brings to glory, for every one of the brethren he is not ashamed to own, for every one of the children given unto him, as appears from the context. As Abraham showed his love to God in not withholding his son, his only son, his beloved son; so God has shewn his love, favor and good-will to men; in not sparing, but sending and giving his own, his only begotten son, his well-beloved son, to suffer and die for them, in order to redeem them and to be a redeemed, one, is an instance of distinguishing grace; for they that are redeemed, are redeemed from among men, out of every kindred, tongue, people and nation; so that by the grace of God they are what they are.

4. Was the apostle a justified person? as he certainly was; he was so by the grace of God; not by any works or merits of his: these he disclaims; for I know nothing by myself, yet am I not hereby justified (1 Cor. 4:4); though he was not conscious of any unfaithfulness in his ministry, yet this was not the matter of his justification before God; nay had he been unconscious of any sin then in him, or done by him, he knew he could not be justified thereby from former sins committed by him; and therefore he desired to be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness, which is of the law, but the righteousness which is of God by faith (Phil. 3:9); the righteousness of Christ, which is imputed of God, and received by faith: if men, Abraham, or any other, were justified by works, they would have whereof to glory; but boasting is excluded in the article of justification, not by the law of works, but by the doctrine of faith. Justification cannot be by works, because they are imperfect; and if a justifying righteousness was by them, the death of Christ would

be in vain, and the grace of God frustrated; but it is safest to conclude with the apostle, that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law (Rom. 3:28); and who always ascribes justification, so the free grace of God. In one place he says, being justified by his grace; and as if it was not strongly enough expressed, he elsewhere says, being justified freely by his grace (Titus 3:7); grace moved God to send his Son to bring in everlasting righteousness, and Christ to work it out; God of his grace imputes it to his people, without works; and faith by which they receive it, is a free-grace-gift of his; and they that receive the gift of righteousness, receive abundance of grace in it and with it.

5. Was the apostle a pardoned sinner? of which there can be no question; this he was, not through any merit of his, but by the grace of God; I obtained mercy, says he, that is, pardoning grace and mercy, even though he had been a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious; and he expresses the abundance of grace displayed herein, the grace of our Lord, adds he, was exceeding abundant with faith and love, which is Christ Jesus (1 Tim. 1:13, 14): pardon of sin, though through the blood of Christ which was shed for it, yet is according to the riches of grace; all that are pardoned, are pardoned, not through any deservings, of theirs, for all alike have sinned, and all the world is become guilty before God; and the law pronounces condemnation and death without mercy; if any are pardoned it is by the grace of God through the blood and sacrifice of Christ: nor even for their repentance and humiliation; truly gracious souls do repent of sin, and are humble for it; but this is not the cause of their pardon; what of this kind is most genuine and evangelical, flows from a sense of pardon applied; first, souls look to Christ by faith for pardon through his blood, and then they mourn for sins pardoned; and never do they mourn better and more kindly, or are more ashamed and confounded because of their sins, than when they are most satisfied that God is pacified towards them for all that they have done: nor is it owing to their confession of sin, and depart me from it, that any are pardoned. Such who have received the grace of God in truth, will confess their sins and depart from them, and such receive mercy, but not as the cause of it; but pardoning mercy with God is used as a motive to forsake sin (Isa. 55:7). And though when men confess their sins, god

is just and faithful to forgive them their sins, yet it is not on account of their confession, but on account of the blood of his Son, that his justice and faithfulness appear in the forgiveness of it. Forgiveness of sin is always attributed to the multitude of mercy in God, to the tender mercy of our God, to the riches of his grace, and to the covenant of his grace, in which this blessing is provided (Heb. 8:12; Ps. 51:1; Luke 1:78; Eph. 1:7).

6. Was the apostle regenerated, called, converted, sanctified? it was all by the grace of God; and so the regeneration, vocation, conversion and sanctification of every one. Regeneration is necessary to salvation; it is in this way God saves his people, and without it none can see nor enter into the kingdom of heaven; and this is not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of men, but of God; of the will, power, and grace of God, who of his own will, of his sovereign good-will and pleasure, begets men with the word of truth (John 1:13; Jam. 1:18): effectual vocation is of grace; the apostle ascribes his calling to grace, when it pleased God—who called me by his grace (Gal. 1:15); and whoever are called, are called with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his (God's) purpose and grace given them in Christ Jesus before the world began (2 Tim. 1:9).

Conversion is not by might or power of men, but by the Spirit of the Lord, by his mighty and efficacious grace; they are turned when he turns them, and not before. Sanctification is by the Spirit of God, and not by the will of men: if any are partakers of sanctification, and of the several parts of it, it is by the grace of God: have any repentance unto life unto salvation, which needeth not to be repented of, it is a grant from God, a gift of Christ, who is exalted as a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel (Acts 11:18; 5:31). God may give men space to repent, but if he does not give them grace to repent, they never will. No means whatever are sufficient of themselves; not the greatest mercies; if any thing, one would think, the goodness of God would lead men to repentance, but it does not; nor the severest judgments, as famine, pestilence, the sword, etc. For notwithstanding these, men return not to the Lord (Amos 4:6-11). The most awakening ministry, such as that of John the Baptist, who preached the doctrine of repentance, will not be effectual of itself, as facts shew; and indeed, unless

God, by his powerful and efficacious grace, takes away the stony heart, and gives an heart of flesh, no man will repent of his sins: faith in Christ is the gift of God, and not of a man's self; it is given to men to believe; nor can any come to Christ, that is, believe in him, unless it is given him of the Father; and hope, when it is a good one, firm and sure and well sounded, it is given, and given through grace (Eph. 2:8; 2 Thess. 2:16); and the same maybe said of every grace of the Spirit, and of every part and branch of sanctification, which is begun in grace, and is completed by it.

7. Did the apostle conduct his life, conversation, and walk, becoming the character he bore as an apostle, a minister, and a saint? this was by the grace of God, and to it he ascribes it; our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-wards (2 Cor. 1:12); and it is the grace of God that teaches and enables the saints to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world (Titus 2:11, 12); and if men persevere in faith and holiness unto the end, it is to be ascribed to the grace and power of God, by which they are kept through faith unto salvation. In a word, it is by the grace of God saints are what they are; by the grace of God they have what they have; and by the grace of God they do what they do. Wherefore,

1). Let us give the glory of all we have, are, and do, to the grace of God: the end God has in all he does, in things spiritual, and relative to our salvation, is the glory of his grace (Eph. 1:6); and our concern should be, as much as in us lies, that this end be answered; and therefore not unto ourselves, to any works, merits, and deserts of ours, but to the grace of God, be all the glory.

2). Let us endeavor to hold fast the doctrines of grace, whereby the glory of the grace of God is maintained; for men may fail of the grace of God (Heb. 12:15), that is, of the doctrines of grace; may come short of them, drop and deny them; for whoever seek for justification and salvation by the works of the law, are fallen from grace (Gal. 5:4), that is, from the doctrine of grace; for from the love and favor of God in his heart, and from the grace of God implanted in the hearts of his people, there can be no falling.

3). Let us take care that the grace of God is not received in vain (2 Cor. 6:1); that is, the gospel of the grace of God, which may be received and professed in vain, when the professors of it are not careful to adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour, by a becoming life and conversation; and when they turn the grace of God, the doctrines of it into lasciviousness, and abuse it to wicked purposes.

4). Let us, such who are truly partakers of the grace of God, be encouraged to expect glory; for to whomsoever God gives grace he gives glory; these are inseparably connected together: whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified: (Rom. 8:30) what we now are, we are by the grace of God; but it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we should be looking, waiting for, and expecting the appearance of Christ, when we shall be like him, and see him as he is (1 John 3:2).

Note:

The reason why this Sermon is placed among the Funeral Discourses, is, that it was first preached on account of the death of the Reverend Mr. John Brine. But as he had left directions not to have any Funeral Sermon preached for him, the character then given of this great and good man was obliged to be but short: The following is the substance of what was then delivered:—I am debarred from saying so much of him, as otherwise I could do, we both having been born in the same place, and myself some years older than him, and from his being among the first-fruits of my Ministry.—I might take notice of his natural and acquired abilities, his great understanding, clear light, and sound judgment in the doctrines of the gospel, and the great and deep things of God:—Of his zeal, skill and courage in vindicating important truths, published by him to the world, by which, he, being dead, yet speaketh. In fine, I might observe to you, that his walk and conversation in the world, was honourable and ornamental to the profession which he made, and suitable to the character he sustained, as a Minister of Jesus Christ, all which endeared him to his friends—But I am forbid to speak any thing more.

12 Who Shall Lay Anything To The Charge Of God's Elect

Occasioned By The Death Of Mrs. Ann Brine, Late Wife Of The Reverend Mr. John Brine. Preached August 11, 1745.

ROMANS 8:33, 34

Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

The preceding chapter contains the believer's complaint of indwelling sin, and expresses the nature; prevalence and ill effects of it, and his grief of mind on that account; and this chapter declares his triumph of faith in a view of deliverance from it, and from an condemnation by it, through the blood, righteousness and sacrifice of Christ: which triumph is founded upon things the most solid and substantial, delivered in the text and context; such as relate to the grace of the Father in predestination, in the mission of his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, in not sparing him, but delivering him up for us all; in the effectual vocation, justification, and glorification of his chosen ones; and which relate to the grace of Christ, in his assumption of human nature, in fulfilling the law both in its precept and penalty, in his sufferings and death, in his resurrection, session at God's right hand, and intercession for his people; and which relate to the grace of the blessed Spirit, in quickening, and renewing carnal minds; in leading men out of themselves, to Christ; in witnessing to their Spirits that they are the children of God, and in helping their infirmities, and making intercession for them according to the will of God; and particularly this triumph, of faith is expressed in the fullest and strongest manner in the words before us, who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? etc.

The words are put by way of interrogation, who shall lay any thing, to the charge of God's elect? or accuse them? or call them to an account? Or enter an action against them, in open court? It is a challenge, a bidding defiance to all and every one to do it; since it is God that justifieth, that is, his elect: he acquits and clears them from all charges exhibited against them; and therefore whatever are said against them are of no avail, and can never issue in their condemnation;

who is he that condemneth the elect of God? that will censure or pass sentence upon them? and if any should, what will it signify, seeing it is Christ that died for their sins, and rose again for their justification, and is at the right hand of God, as their advocate, and ever lives to make intercession for them. Though these things are put by way of question, they may be reduced to absolute propositions: the sense of them is, that "there are none that can lay any thing to the charge of God's elect to any purpose, but what will easily be set aside; nor can any justly bring them under a sentence of condemnation, and much less execute such a sentence on them." The whole may be comprised in the two following propositions:

I. That no charge shall be brought against, nor any condemnation brought upon the elect of God.

II. That the Father's justification of them, the Son's dying for them; his resurrection from the dead, session at the right hand of God, and intercession on their account, are a sufficient and full security to them from all charges and condemnation whatever.

I. That no charge of any avail shall, or can be laid against, or any sentence of condemnation executed upon the elect of God. These are without spot and fault before the throne of God; they are unblameable and unreprieveable in his sight, and there is no condemnation to them. For the further explanation, of this doctrine, I shall,

First, Shew who the elect of God are.

Secondly, In what sense no charge and condemnation can be upon them.

First, Who are the elect of God. These are a select number of men, who are the objects of God's love, whom he has chosen in Christ, unto eternal life and salvation before the foundation of the world, of his own sovereign good will and pleasure, by certain ways of his own appointing, so that they are peculiarly his. It will be proper to take this account into several parts, and briefly explain them.

1. The elect of God are a select number of men, of Adam's posterity; for elect angels are not here meant: they are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; not whole nations, churches, bodies, and communities of men, but particular persons; they are such who are separated and set apart from the rest of mankind, and are alone, and are not reckoned among the nations: as they are

redeemed and called, so they are chosen out of all nations, kindreds, people, and tongues; and though, considered by themselves, they are a great number, which no man can number; yet, comparatively, they are but few, many be called, but few chosen (Matthew 20:16).

2. They are the objects of the love of God, of his everlasting and unchangeable love; and because they are the beloved of the Lord, therefore they are chosen by him unto salvation: so the people of Israel were chosen as a nation to outward privileges above all nations, not because they were more than others, for they were the fewest of all people, but because the Lord loved them (Deut. 7:7,8.) *Electio praesupponit dilectionem*, "Election presupposes love." Love is the source and origin of it: whom God did foreknow, them he did predestinate, as in the context; hence they are styled elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father (1 Pet. 1:2), which is to be understood not of the bare prescience of God, which reaches to all the sons of men, for then, all would be the elect of God; but of such foreknowledge of them as includes in it the strongest love and affection for them; of which his choice of them to everlasting life, is a glaring instance and evidence.

3. They are chosen in Christ, as is expressly asserted in Ephesians 1:4. Christ himself, as mediator, is God's elect; he is so by way of eminency; he was first chosen and then the elect in him; he is the first-born of the election of grace; he was first conceived in the womb of election, and brought forth, and then the many brethren among whom he is the first-born; he was chosen as the head, and they as members in him: hence all grace was given to them in him, and they were blessed with all spiritual blessings in him; yea, hence it is, that they being sanctified, or set apart by God the Father in election, were preserved in him, notwithstanding the fall of Adam, and their own actual transgressions, in order to be called by grace (Jude 1).

4. The choice of them in Christ is unto eternal life and salvation; not unto external blessings and privileges, as the Israelites were, nor to any outward office, though ever so great, as that of apostleship, as Judas the son of perdition was; but to special grace here, and eternal glory hereafter: these are persons ordained to eternal life, vessels of mercy, afore prepared for glory; they are appointed not unto wrath, but to obtain salvation by

our Lord Jesus Christ; which he has been appointed to work out for them, has effected, and will put them into the possession of.

5. This choice of them was made before the foundation of the world, as is affirmed in Ephesians 1:4. The Thessalonians are said to be chosen from the beginning (2 Thess. 2:13), not from the beginning of the preaching of the gospel to them, nor from the beginning of their conversion, but from the beginning of time: or, in other words, from eternity; the phrase being the same with from everlasting, as appears from Proverbs 8:23. This is an act, that does not commence in time, but bears date from eternity; it paired before the men who are the objects of it, were born, and had done either good or evil (Rom. 9:11).

6. It is owing to the sovereign good-will and pleasure of God, who does all things after the counsel of his own will: he predestinates to the adoption of children, according to the good pleasure of his will; he has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and is gracious to whom he will be gracious; and his election of persons to everlasting life, is an election of grace, and is strongly denied to be of works (Rom. 11:5, 6). It is irrespective of faith, holiness, or good works, as causes, motives, and conditions of it; there all follow upon it, and are fruits, effects, and evidences of it.

7. This choice of men to happiness is through certain ways and means of God's own appointing; such as sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth (2 Thess. 2:13), which, as they are fixed in the decree of the means, have their sure and certain accomplishment. God chooses men, not because they were, or because he knew they would be, but that they might be holy; and this he secures for them; for by virtue, and in consequence of their being chosen, he sends the Spirit down into their hearts to sanctify them; and though the work of sanctification is at present imperfect, in pursuance of the divine purposes it shall be completed. So likewise belief of the truth, or faith in Christ who is the truth, and in every doctrine of the word of truth, relating to, him, is another mean ascertained in the decree of election, and is sure by it: as many as are ordained unto eternal life, have believed, do believe, and shall believe, in all ages of time; and none truly believe, but such; and therefore true faith is called: the faith of God's elect (Titus 1:1). It springs from electing grace; it is the fruit

of it, it is the gift of God's grace, and is insured by it; and because of it, the work of faith is begun, it shall be performed with power, Hence,

8. Persons thus chosen, are peculiarly his, the elect of God, yea, they are emphatically cared, his own elect (Luke 18:7). They are not only his by creation, as all mankind are, but they are the people of his choice, a peculiar one; they are elect according to his foreknowledge, they are set apart for himself, for his own use, service and glory; they are chosen by him for his peculiar treasure. But,

Secondly, I am next to show you in what sense no charge can be laid against, nor condemnation come to these persons.

First, No charge, no accusation of them, no crime to be alleged against them: But,

1. Is there nothing they are chargeable with? Are they in every sense clear of all crimes? Can nothing be objected to them, and laid against them? yes, many things. They are, as the descendents of Adam, chargeable with his sin: they were in him seminally, as the root and parent of mankind; they were in him federally, as their covenant-head and representative; in which he was the figure of Christ that was to come; and so they sinned in him, and were made and constituted sinners, through his disobedience; the guilt of which is imputed to them, and they in themselves are liable to condemnation by it: they are chargeable with a corrupt nature they bring into the world with them, being conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity; they are justly called transgressors from the womb; they are chargeable with the loss of original righteousness, and of the image of God, and with a want of conformity to the law of God; they are chargeable with a multitude of actual transgressions committed before conversion, and some with very grievous and notorious ones; not only as being foolish, and disobedient, serving divers lusts and pleasures; but, as living in malice, hateful, and hating one another: so Saul, afterwards Paul, was guilty of injury, persecution and blasphemy; and the Corinthians are laid to be fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, and every thing that is bad (1 Cor. 6:9-11). And after conversion they are all chargeable, with many sins of thought, word, and deed; with sins of omission and commission; with daily infirmities and frequent backslidings; in many things they all offend; and their errors are so many, they cannot understand;

and same of them are suffered to fall into very gross enormities, as Noah, Lot, David, Peter, and others. Wherefore,

2. Are there none that will rise, stand up and charge, these persons? yes, now: their own hearts rise up against them, and charge them; their conscience which is as a thousand witnesses, does often accuse them: there is in every man a conscience, which excuses or accuses for good or bad things done, unless where it is seared as with a red hot iron: but this is not the case of good men, their consciences are tender; and though they are sometimes tempted to extenuate their faults, yet, at ether times, they are ready to aggravate them, and put them in the worst light; and write dismal, desperate, and bitter things against themselves: likewise, they are very apt to charge one another; they are sometimes too forward this way, too inquisitive after each other's weaknesses; bear too hard upon one another for them; and are too severe and censorious, indeed, they are not to suffer sin upon one another; charges may be very lawfully brought, whether in a private, or in a public way, as the nature of the care requires, provided the rules of God's word are observed, and they are exhibited in a kind and tender manner, with a view to the glory of God, and the good of the person or persons charged: moreover, the men of the world are full of charges against the people of God, and traduce them oftentimes very wrongfully, as the Jews did our Lord; and as Tertullus the orator, the apostle Paul; and it is the common lot of the saints to go through good report and bad report; but no weapon formed against them shall prosper, and every tongue that riseth up in judgment against them shall be condemned: they have real faults enough in them; and there is no need of false ones to be imputed to them; to which may be added, Satan is the adversary of believers, ἀντιδικοπ, "a court adversary;" one that enters a suit at law, and brings in an action in open court against another, as the word signifies; he goes about the world, and observes the failures of the saints, takes all advantages, and every opportunity against them; picks up their faults, and aggravates them, and accuses them before the throne: whence he is called the accuser of the brethren (Rev. 12:10). To say no more, the law accuses of the breaches and violations of it; one commandment says, Thou hast sinned against me; and another, Thou hast sinned against me; and the

law is able to make good, and support its charges, and give evidence of them; and it proceeds to pronounce the whole world guilty before God, and so the elect of God among the rest. But then,

3. What will these charges signify? Of what avail will they be? and to what purpose are they laid? since God justifies and discharges from them all, who is superior to all, and from whose judgment there can be no appeal. Though the saints bring charges against themselves, and bring heavy ones against each other; and though the world, Satan, and the law, lay charges against them; yet none of the divine persons bring any, nor will they bring any against them. Not Jehovah the Father, as may be learnt from the text and context; he predestinates them to be conformed to the image of his Son; he calls, justifies, and glorifies them; he is on their side; he is for them, and it matters not who is against them; he has not spared his own Son, but has delivered him up for them all, and gives all things freely with him, verses 29-32. and therefore he will lay nothing to their charge: nor will the Son of God; he is the surety for them; he has died for their sins, and has made an end of them, and brought in everlasting righteousness; and is an advocate for them; wherefore, he will exhibit no charge against them: nor will the holy Spirit; for though he convinces of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; yet he brings near the righteousness of Christ: unto them; works faith in them, to lay hold upon it, and pronounces them righteous on the account of it; he takes of the things of Christ, and shews them to them; he is the comforter of them, and the Spirit of adoption to them; and as Christ is an advocate for them, in the court of heaven, he is an intercessor for them in their own hearts.

2dly, No condemnation can befall them; for if no charges can be laid against them with success, no condemnation can follow. Who is he that condemneth? that is, the elect of God: there are the persons that are understood, though not expressed. Others may be, and are condemned, even all mankind are in Adam; through his offense judgment came upon all men to condemnation (Rom. 5:18). And some being ungodly men, and such who turn the grace of God into lasciviousness, are righteously appointed unto eternal condemnation; yea, every one that believes not, and who lives and dies in impenitence and unbelief, is condemned already; and there is a world that will

be condemned at the last day; but the elect of God, who shall condemn? They are indeed, with the rest of mankind under the sentence of condemnation as considered in Adam, in whom they sinned; and so the sentence of death passed upon them in him. They are by nature children of wrath, and deferring of it, and in their own persons commit things worthy of death; and when they are thoroughly convinced of sin by the Spirit of God, they have the sentence of death within themselves, and say, as the Egyptians did, when their first-born were killed, we be all dead men (Ex. 12:33). Whatever vain opinion they entertained of themselves before the commandment came with power into their consciences, as it did in the apostle Paul; sin then revives, as it did in him, and they die, as to all hopes of attaining happiness by their works; they see themselves dead in law, dead in sin: and after conversion, their hearts often smite and condemn them for sin, though God is greater than their hearts, and knows all things; his own covenant-transactions and agreement with his Son; what his Son has done, and what satisfaction he has made to his law and justice, and therefore will not condemn them. They are too apt to condemn one another: hence that advice of our Lord's, condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned (Luke 6:37). The men of the world are very forward to condemn them as hypocrites, as the worst of men, and not fit to live upon the earth; but the Lord stands at the right hand of the poor to save him from those that condemn his soul (Ps.109:31).

The God of this world, as he accuses them, and stands at their right hand to resist them; so he seeks, and calls for judgment against, and upon them, but in vain. The law is a ministration of condemnation and death to them that are under it: indeed, the elect of God are redeemed from it, and from the curse and condemnation of it; Christ being made a curse for them; and be it so; that it should pass as many sentences of condemnation upon them, as there are sins committed by them; for every sin deserves a sentence, yet οὐδὲν κατακριμα, "there is not one condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus," and redeemed by him; not one sentence can be executed upon them: and though these may all condemn, yet neither Father, Son, nor Spirit, will condemn them: not the Father, for he justifies them; not the Son, for he died for them; and is the Lord their righteousness:

he came not into the world to condemn the world, but that it might be saved by him; nor the blessed Spirit, for these are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. To which may be subjoined, that there persons are loved by God with an everlasting love, which God has sworn shall never depart from them: they are predestinated to eternal life, and shall be glorified; they are in Christ, and to such there is no condemnation; they are brought to believe in Christ, and such have passed from death to life, and shall not come into condemnation; they are justified by the blood of Christ, and shall be saved from wrath through him. I proceed to the other doctrinal proposition.

II. That the Father's justification of the elect, the Son's dying for them, his resurrection from the dead, his session at the right hand of God, and intercession for them, are a sufficient and full security of them from all charges and condemnation.

First, The Father's justification of them: it is God that justifieth; that is, his elect: which shews the eternity of this act; for if the elect of God, as such considered, are the objects of justification; and there were chosen in Christ before the world began, they must be justified as early; or otherwise it could not be always said with truth, God justifieth the elect: and also the specialty of this act of grace; it belonging only to the chosen of God, and precious: and likewise the continuance of it; it can never be made void; it is inseparable with glorification, and so is a security from all charges and condemnation; for,

1. Let it be considered whose act this is: it is God's act; it is he that justifies; he against whom these persons have sinned, whose law they have broken, whose justice they have affronted, whose legislative power and authority they have trampled upon; who is the lawgiver, that is able to save and to destroy it is he that acquits; and if he discharges, who can lay any thing to their charge? Besides, he is just whilst he is the justifier of them: nor would he be just if he did not justify them; for his justice is entirely satisfied with the righteousness of his Son, on their account; and it would be unjust to take satisfaction of their surety for them, and yet bring charges against them: this the judge of all the earth will not do; he always does that which is right.

2. The nature of this act of justification: it is not

teaching men the way of righteousness, or how sinners may be just with God, or instructing men in the doctrine of justification, shewing the method God takes in justifying a sinner: this is what the ministers of the gospel do, who are therefore said to justify many (Dan. 12:3), or, as we render it, turn many to righteousness: nor is it an infusion of righteousness and holiness into the hearts of men, which is no other than sanctification, and is a quite different thing; a work of grace within, and which is imperfect, and is gradually carried on: but it is a forensic term; by this act a man is made *rectus in curia*: it is a pronouncing him righteous, as if he had never sinned; an acquitting him from all charges; and is opposed to condemnation (Rom. 5:18), and so is a security from all such things.

3. That by which God justifies: which is not the obedience of man; nor any works of righteousness done by him: there are imperfect, and by them no man can be justified in the sight of God; these would not be a sufficient security from charges and condemnation; for they themselves are as filthy rags, and need washing in the blood of Jesus: but it is the obedience and righteousness of Christ, by which God justifies; which is complete and perfect; which is answerable to all the demands of law and justice; by which the law is magnified, and made honourable, and with which God is well pleased; and this he imputes to his people, without any consideration of their works; and this secures them from all the charges of law and justice.

4. This act of justification is universal: it reaches to all things with which God's elect may be chargeable; and the righteousness of Christ justifies from all things, from which there can be no justification by the law of Moses: being clothed with this change of raiment, all their iniquities are caused to pass from them; sin is not imputed to them; their iniquities are forgiven, and their sin is covered; and when it is sought for, it shall not be found; they will never be charged with it, nor will it ever be brought against them to condemnation.

Secondly, The death of Christ for them: it is Christ that died. That Christ died is certain; and that he laid down his life for the sheep, for the elect of God, is as certain; and it is plain, from the scriptures, that he died for their sins, to make atonement and reconciliation for them; and this came to pass through his substitution in their room and stead, by having their sins imputed to him and though his death was but once, it is of

an eternal efficacy; and so a full security from all condemnation: for,

1. Sin, the cause of condemnation, is removed by it. Sin was the cause of the condemnation of the angels, and of the old world, and of all mankind in Adam, This is that for which the saints condemn themselves, and one another; and for which the world, Satan, and the law condemn: but this is done away by the death of Christ; he has removed the iniquity of his people in one day, even as far as the east is from the west; he has put it away by the sacrifice of himself; he hath abolished it, he has taken away it, damning power from it; yea, he has finished, and made an utter end of it.

2. By dying, Christ bore the condemnation due to sin: not only the sentence of condemnation paged upon him, as he was the surety of his people; but it was executed on him: and he was not only condemned unanimously by the Jewish Sanhedrim, and then by Pontius Pilate the Roman governor, but he was condemned by the justice of God: and God condemned sin in his flesh, finding it upon him, it being imputed to him: for as he was made sin by imputation that the elect might be made the righteousness of God in him; so he was made a curse for them, that he might redeem them from the curse of the law, which he has effectually done; and consequently there can be no condemnation to them,

3. Through the death of Christ, the law and justice of God are fully satisfied. The law requires holiness of nature, this it has in the human nature of Christ, which is without sin; and also perfect obedience, which it finds in Christ, who always did the things that pleased his Father; and in case of disobedience, it requires a penalty, and which Christ, as the surety of his people, has bore by his sufferings and death; and so the whole righteousness of the law is fulfilled by him for them; which is a full satisfaction to the justice of God; and therefore there is none that can condemn them.

4. Hereby the pardon of sin is procured: without shedding of blood there is no remission; the blood of Christ has been shed for the remission of sins, and it is obtained by it: God, for Christ's sake, forgives all trespasses; and delivers from going down to the pit, having found a sufficient ransom- price in the blood of his Son: nay, since the blood of Christ has been shed for this purpose, it is a point of justice and

faithfulness with God to forgive sin, and cleanse from all unrighteousness; and sin being pardoned, there can be no condemnation for it.

5. The complete justification of God's people, is brought about by the death of Christ: justification is sometimes ascribed to the obedience of Christ; by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous (Rom. 5:19), and sometimes to the blood of Christ, being now justified by his blood, verse 9. And both are concerned in justification: the one is what is commonly called his active obedience; the other his passive obedience; and both together, with the holiness of his nature; are imputed for justification: his righteousness entitles to life; and his blood, his sufferings, and death, secure from wrath to come; and; therefore, it may well be said, with a view to Christ's dying for his people, who is he that condemneth?

Thirdly, The resurrection of Christ from the dead, is another part of the security of God's elect, from all charges and condemnation, yea, rather that is risen again. That Christ is risen, the angels asserted; the apostles were witnesses of it; and so was the holy Ghost, being plentifully poured forth on the disciples as an evidence of that, and of his ascension to heaven. This is a fundamental article, which he that heartily and experimentally knows the power of, shall be saved (Rom. 10:9), and shall never enter into condemnation. For,

1. Christ rose as a conqueror over all his, and his people's enemies: by rising he abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light; and shewed that he had took away the sting of death, which is sin; and had destroyed him that has the power of death, which is the devil; and had overcome the world, and now has in his hands the keys of hell and death; and therefore who shall condemn those for whom he died, and rose again?

2. He rose again as a surety, having satisfied justice: he engaged as a surety for his people from all eternity; God in strict justice, and according to his righteous law, dealt with him as such; he awoke the sword of justice against him; satisfaction was demanded of him, and it was given; and both law and justice being satisfied, Christ was set free: an angel is sent to roll away the stone from the sepulcher; he is discharged by a divine order; it was not possible he should be held by the cords of death, both because of the

dignity of his person, and the performance of his suretyship engagements; and therefore being risen and discharged, as the surety of his people, law and justice, cannot condemn them, nor can any other.

3. He rose again as a common head and representative, and for the justification of God's elect: he stood charged with all their sins; these being laid upon him by his Father, with his own consent, he was condemned, for them; and suffered death on account of them; and when he rose, he was justified in the Spirit; and acquitted from them all; and his people were all justified in him as their public head. Just as they were crucified with him, and buried with him; so they rose with him, and were justified together with him; he was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification (Rom. 4:25).

4. A rather is put upon Christ's resurrection from the dead, as though it was a greater security from condemnation than his death; and so indeed in some sense it is: Christ's death expiated sin, finished transgression, and made an end of it; but his resurrection has brought in the everlasting righteousness for his people: his dying shewed that he was arrested and condemned; and that the sentence of condemnation was executed on him; but his resurrection, that he is discharged, and they in him: notwithstanding Christ's death, had he not rose again, they would have been in their sins; under the power and guilt of them, and so liable to condemnation (1 Cor. 15:17). But Christ being risen, re-appears without sin, even sin imputed; and so they are freed from sin, and from condemnation by it in him.

Fourthly, The session of Christ at the right hand of God, adds to the security of the saints from charges and condemnation, who is even at the right hand God.

1. This includes his ascension into heaven, and his entrance there, both which serve to strengthen this point: when he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, or he triumphed over those who had led his people captive, sin, Satan, the law, and every enemy of theirs; and therefore, since these are led captive, who shall condemn, them? yea, he received gifts for men, even for the rebellious also; so that though they have been rebellious, they are graciously regarded, and shall not be condemned. When he entered into heaven, he entered as their forerunner, in their name, to take possession of it, and prepare it for them, and

has promised to come again and take them to himself, that they may enjoy it; wherefore, it is not possible that they should be condemned with the world.

2. Christ being at the right hand of God shews, that he has done his work he came about; that he has made atonement for sin, and obtained eternal redemption; and that he has done this to satisfaction; and therefore is highly exalted by, and at the right hand of, God, where he has all power in heaven and in earth; where he is above all; angels, principalities, and powers, being subject to him; and where he must sit until all enemies are put under his feet; it therefore cannot be in the power of any to condemn those for whom he died: to which may be added, that these are not only raised together with him, but they are made to sit together in heavenly places in him; and must be secure from condemnation (Eph. 2:6).

Fifthly, and lastly, The intercession of Christ for those whom the Father has chosen, and he has died for, is another branch of their security from charges and condemnation: if he rebukes those that bring charges against them, as he does, who dare bring them? and if he is an advocate with the Father for them, as he is, who can condemn them? this part of Christ's work which he performs in heaven, as a priest upon his throne, is done, not by making vocal prayer, as in the days of his flesh, which does not seem necessary; nor by supplicating God, as an angry judge, which is not consistent with his state of exaltation, nor with his having made peace, by the blood of his cross; nor by litigating, or controverting a point, in the court of heaven, though he is a counselor, and an advocate: but by the appearance of his person, for his people; by the presentation of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice for them, which speak for peace, pardon, and atonement; by offering up the prayers and praises of them unto God; by declaring it as his will, that such and such blessings be bestowed upon them; and by applying the benefits of his death unto them; and which abundantly secure them from condemnation. For,

1. It should be considered who he is that intercedes, and what an interest he has in him with whom he intercedes: he is the Son of God who makes intercession, who can engage his heart to approach unto him; and who from the relation he stands in to God, must have an interest in him, and so have the persons for whom

he intercedes; for he is his God, and their God, his Father, and their Father; wherefore, his intercession cannot fail: and, whereas the consideration of Christ, the great high priest, that is passed unto the heavens, being the Son of God, is an argument to hold fast a profession of faith, and to come with boldness to the throne of grace (Heb. 4:14, 16). So it may be improved by faith, as a very strong one against all charges and condemnation taking place on those for whom Christ intercedes.

2. The intercession of Christ is constant; it always continues: though he was dead, he is alive, and lives for evermore; and he lives not for himself only but for others; he ever lives to make intercession: and because he is constantly employed in this work, therefore, as fast as charges are brought against his people, he removes them; by pleading for them, and shewing the falsehood or injustice of such charges; or the reason why, though true, they are not to be received; and on any attempt to condemn them, he shews reason why there is, and should be, no condemnation to them.

3. His intercession is always prevalent: he, who is the redeemer of his people, is strong; the Lord of Hosts is his name; and he pleads their cause, and thoroughly pleads it; and always carries his point; for his pleas are founded upon his propitiatory sacrifice, which is of a sweet-smelling savor to God, and gives a full satisfaction to his justice; to that it has nothing to object to those on whole account it was offered up, and the virtue of it is pleaded. Christ was ever heard, when here on earth, and so he is now in heaven: whatever he asks for he has; yea, whatever is asked for in his name, is given.

4. The application of salvation is owing to the intercession of Christ, though the impetration of it is by his death; and the apostle argues from the evidence of the one to the certainty of the other; for if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life (Rom. 5:10), that is, by his interceding life: yea, the proof of Christ being able to save, is taken from his perpetual intercession; wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them (Heb.7:25). The influence therefore which the intercession of Christ must have on the security of the saints from condemnation, is very evident.

Thus have I endeavored to improve this passage of scripture upon the mournful occasion of the death of Mrs ANN BRINE, late member of the church of Christ in this place, (near Cripplegate) and late wife of the pastor of it; at whose request I have preached from it to you; it having been of singular use to the deceased.

It may now be expected I should say something concerning her, which will be chiefly about the gracious experience she was favoured with. She was a daughter of Mr. JOHN MOOR of Northampton; an eminent preacher of the gospel, a minister of the Baptist denomination, of considerable abilities and learning, whom I had the honour to have a personal knowledge of, and acquaintance with. But though she had a religious education, her conversion, her knowledge of Christ, and experimental acquaintance with divine things, were not owing to that, but to the efficacy of divine grace: by several papers of her own writing, put into my hands, it appears, how she came by the knowledge of salvation by Christ, and the great doctrines of the gospel; which were the support of her soul, and the foundation of her joy. These express the sight and sense she had of sin; her abhorrence and detestation of it; the view she had of the loveliness of Christ; of the necessity and suitableness of salvation by him; and how she was enabled to cast her soul on him; and truer in him for eternal life and happiness: but, among the rest, I find one paper, written little more than a year ago, when she took a review of her experience; led thereunto upon a supposition, that there were yet some very great troubles to come upon the churches and servants of Christ, she once thought had been over; which put her upon considering, how it would fare with her in such a time of trial; and what evidence she had of her being a child of God: for which purpose she observed how it had been with her of late; what was her present frame of mind and thoughts of things, and how it had been with her heretofore, and whether her former experience was from nature, or from the Spirit of God.

As to the first of these, how it had been of late, and how it was with her then, her words are these: "I have often thought my spots are not the spots of God's children; I find so much sin bubbling up in my heart; so many sins of omission and commission, daily and hourly; I can say, that in me, that is in my

flesh, dwells no good thing; and such an evil heart of unbelief, departing from the living God. Sure it is not with the saints as with me! At the same time I have some secret hope, which I would not part with for all the world: at some times I have earnest desires after a full conformity to Christ, and thirstings after him. O! that I could love him more: O! that I could serve him better: O! that! I found more love in me to his ways, his ordinances, and his people: but, O! wretched creature that I am; who shall deliver me from this body of sin? At some times I think I can say with the apostle, thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ, who hath given me the victory. Those three scriptures have of late, upon various occasions, been sweet under a sense of sin. If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean (Matthew 8:2), To whom shall I go, but unto thee? Thou hast the words of eternal life (John 6:68). The name of the Lord is a strong tower, whither the righteous run and are safe (Prov. 18:10).

Though I am a vile, sinful, polluted creature, and, as I think, the most vile of all thy creatures; yet, (or such, for the very chief of sinners, thou didst suffer and die, and who knows but for me? I know this, that if thou wilt, thou canst make even me clean; and though I am thus sinful, to whom can I go, but to that God against whom I have sinned? there is no help any where else; no other name given, whereby any can be saved, but the name Christ Jesus." She next proceeds to inquire, how it had been with her formerly, when God first begun to work upon her soul, and she set out in the way of religion; concerning which, she thus expresses herself: "Have I not experienced some things which natural men are strangers to? O! sure I hope I have: upon a recollection of several parts of my former experience, I was warmed, and assured myself this question; Did this or that flow from nature? No; nature is averse to it. Did education produce it? No; for if that could have had such an effect, it might as well have produced it sooner, for it was not any particular care of my parents, at the time of my awakenings, that was a means thereof; for some time before their care had been abated to what was usual; and my heart more averse to God and good than ever. Did sabbaths seem before this time delightful? and was I before convicted, instructed, edified, or comforted, by the word preached? No; I too well remember the quite contrary of this; even when sabbaths were burdensome instead

of delightful; when, if I was obliged to be present, I strove to keep from giving any attention to what was delivered. Had I love for the people of God? No; I had an aversion to many of them; nor did I love any for the sake of their being saints. Had I a sight and sense of sin; of its evil nature? No; I thought myself as good as others that talk more: I did not know that I was poor, and wretched, and blind, and naked then: Did I taste a sweetness in the scriptures? No; I thought them to be only the inventions of some men, done with a design to keep others in awe. Did I ever see the absolute need of a Saviour before? No; I thought my own works were to save me, and reasoned thus sometimes: I have not been guilty of murder, stealing, etc. and so am in as fair a way for a better world, if any such there be, as others."

Having put there questions, and resolved them in the above manner, she rightly draws the following conclusion. "Then sure what I have met with and experienced, must be from the Spirit of God; as conviction of sin, of its heinous, and aggravated nature; of original, as well as actual transgression; the curse demerited by it; the sense of my own inability to perform the thing that is good; the discovery of my need of a Saviour; my seeing Christ to be a fair, suitable, all-sufficient, and able Saviour; my approving of him, and application to him for my Saviour; my pressing desires towards him, as my alone and complete Saviour; my admiration of the love of Father, Son and Spirit, manifested in the great concern of man's salvation; my discovering the harmony. and agreement; the sublimity and sweetness of the holy scriptures; and the effects that many sweet and precious promises set home to my soul have had on me; my hungering and thirsting after Christ, his grace, and manifestation of his love and pardoning mercy; my abhorring myself for all that I have done; especially for those sins which I thought were committed against light and love; my love to young converts; my longing for the return of sabbaths, the comfort I have received under the preaching of the gospel, etc. These were things I was once an utter stranger to, and do believe the carnal mind is enmity against. Why then it must be from above; and if so, then he that hath begun the good work, will carry it on to the day of Christ. If the Lord had a mind to have destroyed me, he sure would not have shewn me such things as these; and

if I am the Lord's, then that promise stands firm, with the righteous it shall go well (Isa. 3:10), and what if troubles should arise? what if I should suffer, or even fall in the common calamity? if the Lord is pleased to support under, and give suffering grace, suffering faith, and suffering patience, with suffering trials,

I can do all things, or can bear

All sufferings, if my Lord be there; Sweet pleasure mingles with the pains, Whilst his left hand my head sustains.

"I leave myself, my all, in his hands, and desire cheerfully to submit to his will in all things; and not be anxious about this, or the other trying dispensation of providence; knowing that he can make hard things easy, and crooked things straight; hoping that these things he will do for me, and not forsake me." This was the comfortable result of her thoughts, occasioned by a melancholy scene of troubles she had in view: but, she is got safe to her father's house, and is secure from them. How soon they may come to pass, namely, the "giving the outward court to the Gentiles, to be trodden under foot; the slaying of the witnesses; the leaving their dead bodies unburied for three days and a half, or three years and a half; and their enemies rejoicing over them;" things she was meditating upon, God only knows: may we be prepared for them, supported under them, and carried through them should they be in our day, which is very probable.

She was a person attended with frequent disorders of body, and which often came upon her on Lord's days; whereby she was prevented waiting upon the Lord in his word and ordinances, which were delightful to her; and in which she received much spiritual advantage: this gave her a great concern of mind; and she would sometimes say, "she chose, if it was, the will of the Lord, that she might have two days affliction, instead of one, on other days, could she be free on the Lord's day, that she might have the opportunity of hearing the word which was so useful to her."

Her last illness was very short, and it was not expected it would have issued in death. Under it she was very comfortable, resigned to the will of God, and trusting in Christ, and so died in the Lord: wherefore, you, my Brother, and the rest of the surviving relations, have no reason to mourn as those without hope, since them that sleep in Jesus, God will bring with him, and

her among the rest, when you will meet, and never part more, and be for ever with the Lord.

Let what has been the subject of discourse on this sorrowful occasion, be regarded by each of us; which may serve as a direction to us, where to go for relief under all charges brought against us, either by ourselves or others; and under a sense of deserved condemnation, and especially when harassed with the accusations of Satan, and the condemnation of our own hearts: let us apply to Christ; let us take the shield of faith, that shield which faith lays hold on, and uses to good purposes when it wields it aright; namely, the blood, righteousness and sacrifice of Christ; his resurrection, session at God's right hand, and intercession: let us hold up, and hold forth these things, as a full answer to every charge, and as a sufficient reason, why no condemnation can come to us.

This may lead us on to observe, how much we are beholden to Christ; and of what use he is to us, as dying, rising again, ascending on high, sitting at the right hand of God, and there interceding for us: how valuable he is, and how precious he should be to us; and, particularly, what a regard we should have for his righteousness, which of itself clears from all charges, and secures from condemnation; and, therefore, it should be our chief desire, and real concern to be found in him, not having on our own righteousness, but his. It becomes us, and is best for us, to look to him at all times; to place our confidence in him, and fetch all our comfort from him; for if there be any consolation, it is in him; and seeing we receive so much benefit by him, we are under obligation to glorify him, with our bodies and spirits, which are his.

13 The Doctrine Of Justification, By The Righteousness Of Christ, Stated And Maintained.

ACTS 13:39

And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

This, and the preceding verse, appear, at first view, to contain those two great doctrines of the gospel, pardon of sin, and justification from it, the former of which I have largely insisted on, from the foregoing words, and shall now consider the latter, which I

propose to do in the following method.

I. I shall explain the act of justification, and shew what it is, and what it is not.

II. Enquire into the author of it, or who it is that justifies.

III. Shew the matter of it, or what that is, for the sake of which any are justified.

IV. Say something concerning the form of it, which is by imputation of righteousness. V. Consider the date of justification.

VI. Point out the objects thereof, or who they are that are justified.

VII. Mention the several effects, which follow upon it, or are closely connected with it. VIII. And lastly, Give some account of the several Properties of it.

I. I shall explain the act of justification, and shew both what it is not, and what it is. And,

1. Strictly, and properly speaking, it is not the pardon of sin. These two acts of divine grace are in strict connection with each other, and are not to be separated; that is to say, where the one is, the other also is; yet, I think, they may be distinguished. Divines generally make justification to consist

in the remission of sins, and in the imputation of Christ's righteousness; which some make different parts; others say, they are not two integrating parts of justification, or acts numerically and really distinct, but only one act respecting two different terms, à quo & ad quem; just as by one, and the same act, darkness is expelled from the air, and light is introduced into it; so by one, and the same act of justification, the sinner is absolved from guilt, and pronounced righteous. Hence they conclude, that those divines express the whole nature of justification, who say, that it consists in the remission of sins, and who say, that it consists in the imputation of righteousness; because, say they, when God forgives us our sins, he pronounces us righteous, by the imputation of Christ's righteousness; and when he pronounces us righteous, by the imputation of Christ's righteousness, he forgives us our sins. I readily allow that there is a very great agreement between justification and pardon, in their efficient, impulsive, and procuring causes, in their objects, or subjects, in their commencement, and manner of completion: the same God that pardons the sins of his people, justifies

them, or accounts them righteous; the same grace, which moved him to the one, moved him to the other; as the blood of Christ was shed for the remission of sins, so by it are we justified; all who are justified are pardoned; and all who are pardoned, are justified, and that, at one and the same time; both these acts are finished at once, simul & semel, and are not carried on in a gradual and progressive way, as sanctification. But all this does not prove them to be one and the same, for though they agree in these things, in others they differ; for justification is a pronouncing a person righteous according to law, as though he had never sinned; not so pardon: it is one thing for a man to be tried by law, cast, and condemned, and then receive the king's pardon; and another thing to be tried by the law, and, by it, to be found and declared righteous, as though he had not sinned against it. Moreover, though pardon takes away sin, and therefore is expressed by God's casting of it behind his back, and into the depths of the sea, and by a removal of it from his people, as far as the east is from the west; (Isa. 38:17; Micah 7:20; Ps. 103:13) yet it does not give a righteousness, as justification does; pardon of sin, indeed, takes away our filthy garments, but it is justification that clothes us with change of raiment. Besides, more is required, and was given for our justification, than for our pardon; the blood of Christ was sufficient to procure pardon; but, besides, his suffering of death, the holiness of his nature, and the perfect obedience of his life, must be imputed for justification. Again, though pardon frees from punishment, yet, strictly and properly speaking, it does not give a title to eternal life; that justification properly gives, and is one good reason why the apostle calls it Justification of life. (Rom. 5:18) If a king pardons a criminal, he does not thereby give him a title to his crown and kingdom; if he will, when he has pardoned him, take him to court, make him his son and heir, it must be by another distinct act of royal favour. Once more, justification passed on Christ, as our head and Representative, when he rose from the dead, but so did not pardon. We may truly say, that Christ was justified, because the scriptures say so, (1 Tim. 3:16) but we cannot say that he was pardoned; should we, it would sound very harsh in our ears, as well as be, I think, a very unwarrantable expression; therefore pardon and justification may be

considered as two distinct things. In fine, if these two are one and the same, the apostle must be guilty of a tautology in our text, where he speaks distinctly of justification, having fully expressed forgiveness of sin in the preceding verse.

2. Justification is not a teaching, or an instructing of men in the way and method how they are or may be justified. When Christ as God's righteous servant, is said to justify many by his knowledge; (Isa. 53:11) the meaning is, not that he, by his knowledge, or doctrine, should only teach men how they might be justified, or what is God's way and method of justifying sinners; for this is no more than what the ministers of the gospel do, who are said to turn many to righteousness, or, as it is in the original text, to justify many; (Dan. 12:3) which they do, by preaching the gospel, wherein the righteousness of God is revealed, from faith to faith; and which, being blessed and owned by the Spirit of God, is the ministration of righteousness to many: but the meaning is, that he should give to many a spiritual knowledge of himself, which, in other words, is faith; by which they should have a comfortable apprehension of their justification by his righteousness.

3. Justification is not an infusion of righteousness into persons; to justify, is not to make men holy and righteous, who were unholy and unrighteous, by producing any physical or real change in them; for this is to confound justification and sanctification together, which are very manifestly distinct; the one being a work of grace in us; the other an act of grace towards us; the one is imperfect, the other perfect; the one is progressive, and carried on by degrees; the other is complete, and finished at once. Besides, justification is never used in scripture in a physical, but in a forensic sense; (see Deut. 25:1; Prov. 17:15; Isa. 5:23; Rom. 5:16, 18 and 8:33, 34) and stands opposed, not to a state of impurity, or unholiness, but to a state of condemnation.

4. Justification is an act of God's free grace, whereby he clears his people from sin, discharges them from condemnation, and reckons and accounts them righteous for the sake of Christ's righteousness, which he has accepted of, and imputes unto them. Some very excellent divines have distinguished justification into active and passive. Active justification is God's act, it is God that justifies; passive justification is

the same act, terminating on the conscience of the believer; active justification is strictly and properly justification, passive justification is improperly so; active justification precedes faith, passive justification is by faith.

Again, justification may be considered either in *foro Dei*, and so it is an eternal, immanent act in God: or in *foro conscientiæ*, and so it is declarative to and upon the conscience of the believer; or in *foro mundi*, and so it will be notified to men and angels at the general judgment.

Again, let it be farther observed, that the scriptures sometimes speak of the justification of God's people, either of their persons, or faith, or cause, before men, and then it is ascribed to their works; and, at other times, of their persons before God, which is said to be without works; it is now, not of the former, but of the latter our text speaks, and which I am considering; and shall now proceed,

II. To enquire into the author, or efficient cause of justification, who is the great God of heaven and earth: It is God that justifies; (Rom. 8:34) which may well be wondered at, when it is considered that he is the supreme Judge of all, who will do right; that his law is the rule by which he acts in this affair; that this law is broken by the sin of man; that sin, which is a breach of the law, is especially committed against him, and is hateful to him; that he is a God that will not admit of an imperfect righteousness, in the room of a perfect one; and that he has power to condemn, and reason sufficient to do it; when, I say, these things are considered, it is amazing that this God should justify. For the farther illustration of this head, I shall endeavour to shew the concern that all the three Persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, have in the justification of the elect.

1. God the Father is the contriver of the scheme and method of our justification; he was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses; (2 Cor. 5:19) he drew the model and platform of it, which is *Nodus Deo vindice dignus*. It would have remained a puzzling question to men and angels, how should man be just with God? had not his grace employed his wisdom to find out a ransom, whereby he has delivered his people from going down to the pit of corruption; which ransom is no other than

his own Son, whom he sent, in the fulness of time, to execute the scheme he had so wisely formed in his eternal mind which he did by finishing transgression, making an end of sin, making reconciliation for iniquity, and bringing in an everlasting righteousness; which righteousness, being wrought out by Christ, God was well pleased with, because hereby his law was magnified and made honourable; and, having graciously accepted of it, he imputes it freely to all his people, and reckons their righteous on the account of it.

2. God the Son, as God, is the co-efficient cause of it, with his Father. As he has equal power with him to forgive sin, he also has to acquit, discharge, and justify from it. As Mediator, he is the Head and Representative; in whom all the seed of Israel are justified; as such, he has wrought out a righteousness, answerable to the demands of the law, by which they are justified; and is the Author and Finisher of that faith, which looks unto, lays hold on, and apprehends that righteousness for justification.

3. God the Holy Ghost convinces men of the weakness, imperfection, and insufficiency of their own righteousness to justify them before God; he brings near, and sets before them, the righteousness of Christ, and works faith in them to lay hold on it, and receive it; he intimates to their consciences the justifying sentence of God, on the account of Christ's righteousness, and bears a testimony to and with their spirits, that they are justified persons; and hence the saints are said to be justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God; (1 Cor. 6:11) but this testimony of the Spirit is not so properly justification in itself, as an actual perception of it, before granted, by a kind of a reflex act of faith, as Dr. Ames expresses it. Now this is the part which Father, Son, and Spirit, severally bear in justification: the Father has contrived it, the Son has procured it, and the Spirit applies it. I go on,

III. To consider the matter of justification, or what that is for the sake of which God's elect are justified. And,

1. Man's obedience to the law of works, is not the matter of his justification, or that for the sake of which he is justified, for this is imperfect, and therefore not justifying; and was man's obedience his justifying

righteousness, his justification would be by works, and not by grace; which is contrary to the whole stream and current of scripture. Besides, if righteousness is by the law, then Christ is dead in vain, and his righteousness is needless and useless; which must highly reflect both on the grace and wisdom of God.

2. Nor is man's obedience to the gospel, as to a new and milder law, his justifying righteousness before God. The scheme of some, if I understand it right, is this; that Jesus Christ has procured a relaxation of the old law, and has introduced a new law, a remedial law, a law of milder terms; which new law is the gospel, and its terms, faith, repentance, and new obedience; which, though imperfect, yet being sincere, will be accepted of by God, in the room of a perfect righteousness. But the whole scheme is entirely false; the law is not relaxed, nor any of its severities abated; its power is not infringed, it has the same commanding and condemning power it ever had over those that are under it; nor is the gospel a law, it is a pure declaration of grace and salvation by Christ; it has no commands, but all promises; there is nothing in it that looks like a law; and if faith and repentance were the terms of it, and required by it, as conditions of men's acceptance with God, it would not be a remedial law, a law of milder terms; for it was much easier for Adam, in a state of innocence, to have kept the whole law, than for man, in his fallen state, to repent and believe in Christ of himself; besides, nothing can more reflect upon the justice of God than to say that he will accept of an imperfect righteousness in the room of a perfect one; he who is the Judge of all the earth, will do right; and he, whose judgment is according to truth, will never call or account that a righteousness which is not one.

3. Nor is a profession of religion, even of the best, a matter of our justification. Men may have a form of godliness, and deny the power of it, have a name to live, and yet are dead, appear outwardly righteous to men, and yet be inwardly full of all manner of impurity; they may submit to all Christ's ordinances, be baptized in his name, sit down at his table, and constantly attend on his word, and yet be far from righteousness, their fear towards God being only taught by the precept of men; yea, supposing they were sincere in all this, they could not be justified by it. Sincerity, in any religion, even in the best religion,

is not our justifying righteousness: there may be sincere Mohammedans, sincere Papists, and sincere Pagans, as well as sincere believers in Christ; one man may be a sincere persecutor of the true religion, as well as another may be a sincere professor of it. Our Lord told his disciples, that the time would come, when some men should think they did God service in killing them; (John 16:2) and it is certain the apostle Paul before his conversion, thought with himself, that he ought to do many things contrary to Jesus of Nazareth. (Acts 26:9) But taking sincerity in the best sense, for a grace of the Spirit of God, which indeed, runs through, and accompanies all other graces, and makes our faith to be unfeigned, our love to be without dissimulation, and our hope without hypocrisy; I say, taking it in this sense, it belongs to sanctification, and not to justification; which are two distinct things, and not to be confounded; for the whole real work of sanctification is neither the whole or a part of our justifying righteousness; and if the whole work is not, then not a part of it and if not a part of it, then,

4. The *τὸ credere*, or act of believing, which is a part of sanctification, is not imputed to us for justification, as Arminius and his followers have asserted; endeavouring to establish this notion from some passages in Romans 4:3, 5, 9, where faith is said to be counted for righteousness; particularly the faith of Abraham; by which the apostle means not the act, but the object of faith, even the righteousness of Christ, which God, in verse 6, is said to impute without works. That this is his sense is manifest, from this one single consideration the very same it, which was imputed to Abraham for righteousness, is imputed to all those who believe on him, that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, verses 22-24. Now supposing that Abraham's faith was reckoned and imputed to him for a justifying righteousness, it cannot be reasonably thought that it should be imputed also for righteousness to all that believe; besides, it ought to be observed, that the apostle does not say that this was imputed, *ἀντί δικαιοσύνης*, instead of righteousness; but *εἰς δικαιοσύνην*, unto righteousness, and intends no more here than what the apostle elsewhere says, that with the heart man believes unto righteousness; (Rom. 10:10) that is, with his heart, or heartily, he believes in Christ for righteousness; which righteousness,

and not faith, is imputed to him for justification; for faith, as it is our act, is our own; hence we read of his faith, and my faith, and thy faith in scripture; (Hab. 2:5; James 2:18) but the righteousness by which we are justified is the righteousness of another, and therefore not faith. Moreover, faith, as an act of ours, is a duty; for whatsoever we do, in a religious way, we do but what is our duty to do; and, if it is a duty, it belongs to the law; for, as all the declarations and promises of grace belong to the gospel, so all duties belong to the law; and if faith belongs to the law, as a duty, it is a work of it, and therefore by it we cannot be justified; for by the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified. Besides, faith is imperfect, it has many deficiencies; and, was it perfect, it is but a part of the law, though one of the weightier parts of it; and God, whose judgment is according to truth, will never reckon or account a partial conformity to the law a complete righteousness. Add to this, that faith and righteousness are manifestly distinguished; (Rom. 1:17 and 3:22) the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; it is unto all, and upon all them that believe. Something else, and not faith, is represented as our justifying righteousness: faith is not the blood, nor obedience of Christ, and yet by these we are said to be justified, or made righteous. (Rom. 5:9, 19) We are, indeed, by faith said to be justified by faith, (Rom. 5:1) but not by faith, as an act of ours, for then we should be justified by works; nor by faith as a grace of the Spirit, for this would be to confound sanctification and justification; but we are justified by faith objectively, as it looks to, receives, apprehends, and embraces Christ's righteousness for justification. And let it be observed, that though we are said to be justified by faith, yet faith is never said to justify us. And here give me leave to correct a vulgar, though but a verbal mistake, in calling faith, justifying faith. I am well satisfied sound divines have used this phrase without any ill meaning; and no less a person than the great Dr. Goodwin, whose works I much value and esteem, has entitled one of his treatises, *Of the Object and Acts of Justifying Faith*: But why it should be called justifying faith, any more than adopting or pardoning faith, I see not; since it has just the same concern in adoption and pardon, as it has in justification. Are we said to be justified by faith, or, by faith, to receive the

righteousness of Christ for justification? We are also said, by faith, to receive the remission of sins, and to be the children of God, by faith, in Christ Jesus. (Acts 26:18; Gal. 3:26) Besides, what do we, or can we say more of the righteousness of Christ; than that it is a justifying one? In one word, it is God, and not faith, that justifies. But,

5. The matter of our justification, or that for the sake of which we are justified, is the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ; by which I mean not his essential righteousness as God: nor his righteousness and fidelity to him, that appointed him, in the discharge of his mediatorial office; nor do I take in any of his actions performed by him in heaven, as Jesus Christ the righteous; only those which he wrought in his state of humiliation here on earth: and not all these neither, for his extraordinary works and miracles must be excluded; for “they, as a great man well observes, rather transcend the predicaments of the Ten Commandments, than are parts of the righteousness of the law: they were proofs of his divinity, and the signs and badges, rather than the duties of his office. He, indeed, by them, shewed himself to be the only Mediator, but he did not act the Mediator in them; and he did them that men might believe in his righteousness, but they were no ingredients in that righteousness on which they were to believe.” But by the righteousness of Christ, I mean that which consists of what is commonly called his active and passive obedience; by the former, is meant the conformity of his life to the precepts of the law, and is, strictly speaking, that obedience of his, by which we are made righteous; and by the latter, is meant his sufferings and death, which in scripture, are expressed by his blood. This distinction, though taken from the schools, is not very accurate. Passive obedience is a contradiction in terms; nor can Christ’s sufferings and death be properly called obedience. Obedience belongs to the predicament, or class of action, and sufferings and death to that of passion. Besides, Christ’s sufferings and death flow from his obedience; they are the effects of it, they are in consequence of his subjection and submission to his Father’s will. What looks most likely to prove Christ’s sufferings and death to be an obedience, is the text in Philippians 2:8, where Christ is said to be obedient unto death. But

this will fall short of doing it; for as a judicious divine observes, it may as well be inferred, because Peter and Paul confessed Christ unto death, therefore their confession and death were one and the same. The true sense of the words is, that Christ was obedient to his Father, from the cradle to the cross, during the whole course of his life, even to the very moment of his death. It will be allowed, that Christ was, in some sense, active in his sufferings, he being God, as well as man. Hence he is said to lay down his life of himself; (John 10:18; Isa. 53:12; Eph. 5:2; Heb. 9:14) to pour out his soul unto death; to give himself an offering and sacrifice; yea, through the eternal Spirit, to offer up himself to God; and it will be as readily granted that Christ’s sufferings and death, which are commonly called passive obedience, are requisite unto, and are imputed to us for our justification. Hence we are said to have healing by his stripes, (Isa. 53:5; Rom. 5:9, 10) to be justified by his blood, and to be reconciled to God by his death: but then this is not to be understood as exclusive of the imputation of his active obedience, nor of the holiness of his human nature. There are some divines that exclude Christ’s active obedience from being any part of the righteousness by which we are justified: they allow, that it is a condition requisite in him, as Mediator, which qualifies him for his office, and that without it his death would not have been effectual and meritorious. But they deny that this obedience strictly and properly speaking, is the matter of our justification, or that it is imputed to us, or reckoned to us, as ours: they suppose that Christ was obliged to this obedience as a creature for himself, and that it was unnecessary to us, because his sufferings and death were sufficient for our justification. On the other hand, I firmly believe, that not only the active obedience of Christ, with his sufferings and death, but also that the holiness of his human nature is imputed to us for justification. The law requires an holy nature, and perfect obedience, and, in case of disobedience, enjoins punishment. Through sin, our nature is become unholy, our obedience imperfect, and so we are liable to punishment. Christ has assumed an holy human nature, and in it performed perfect obedience to the law, and suffered the penalty of it; all which he did not for himself, but for us; and unto us it is all imputed for our justification. He is of God, made unto

us, that is, by imputation, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. (1 Cor. 1:30) Wisdom may stand in general for justification, because there is in it such a manifest display of the wisdom of God; and the other three may be considered as so many parts of it. Sanctification may intend the holiness of his human nature; which is that law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which frees from the law of sin and death. Righteousness may signify his active obedience, by which many are made righteous; and Redemption may express his sufferings and death, whereby sin was condemned in the flesh, and so the whole righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us. I shall now very briefly give some reasons why, I think, Christ's active obedience, in particular, as well as his sufferings and death, is imputed for justification.

1. Because all that must be imputed for our justification, which the law requires, and without which it cannot be satisfied. Now, let it be observed, that the law, before man had sinned, only obliged him to obedience; since his fall, it obliges him both to obedience and punishment; and, unless its precepts are perfectly obeyed, and its whole penalty endured, it cannot be satisfied; and unless it is satisfied, there can be no justification by it. If Jesus Christ, therefore, engages, as a surety, to make satisfaction to the law, in the room and stead of his people, he must both obey the precept of the law, and suffer the penalty of it; his submitting to the one, without conforming to the other, is not sufficient; one debt is not paid by another; his paying off the debt of punishment did not exempt from obedience, as the paying off the debt of obedience, did not exempt from punishment. Christ did not satisfy the whole law by either of them separately, but by both conjunctly by his sufferings and death he satisfied the threatenings of the law, but not the precepts of it; and, by his active obedience, he satisfied the preceptive part of the law, but not the penal part of it; but, by both, he satisfied the whole law, and magnified it, and made it honourable, and therefore both must be imputed for our justification.

2. Because we are justified by a righteousness, and that is the righteousness of Christ. Now righteousness, strictly speaking, consists in actual obedience; it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments, Deuteronomy 6:25. Christ's

righteousness lay in doing, not in suffering. "All righteousness is either a habit, or an act; but sufferings are neither, and therefore not righteousness: no man is righteous because he is punished; if so, the devils and damned in hell would be righteous, in proportion to their punishment; the more severe their punishment, and the more grievous their torments, the greater their righteousness must be; if there is any righteousness in punishment, it must be in the punisher, not in the punished." If then we are justified by the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, it must be by his active obedience, and not merely by his sufferings and death; because these, though they free us from death, yet they do not, strictly speaking, make us righteous.

3. Because we are expressly said to be made righteous by the obedience of one, (Rom. 5:19) which is Christ. Now by obedience, in this place, cannot be meant the sufferings and death of Christ; because, strictly speaking, they are not his obedience, but flow from it, as has been observed. Besides, the antithesis, in the text, determines the sense of the words; for if, by one man's actual disobedience many were made sinners, so, by the rule of opposition, by one man's actual obedience, many are made righteous.

4. Because the reward of life is promised not to suffering, but to doing; the law says, Do this and live; it promises life not to him that suffers the penalty, but to him that obeys the precept. "There never was a law, as an excellent divine observes, even among men, either promising or declaring a reward due to the criminal, because he had undergone the punishment of his crimes." Christ's sufferings and death being satisfactory to the comminatory, or threatening part of the law, are imputed to us for justification, that so we may be freed and discharged from the curse, and hell, and wrath. But these, as they do not constitute us righteous, do not, properly speaking, entitle us to eternal life; but the active obedience, or righteousness of Christ, being imputed to us, is our justification of life, or what gives us the title to eternal life.

5. Because Christ's active obedience was performed for us, in our room and stead, and therefore must be imputed to us for justification. If it should be said, that Christ, as a creature, being made of a woman, and made under the law, was obliged to yield obedience to that law for himself; I answer, that he assumed

human nature, became a creature, subjected himself to the law, and obliged himself to yield obedience to it, not for himself, but for us; not upon his own, but our account; to or for us a Child is born, a Son is given; (Isa. 9:6) and if Christ only in his sufferings, and not in his obedience, is given to us, we should not have a whole Christ given us, only a suffering Christ, not an obeying one.

Let it be further observed, that Christ's active obedience to the law for us, and in our room and stead, does not exempt us from personal obedience to it, any more than his sufferings and death exempt us from a corporal death, or suffering for his sake. It is true, indeed, we do not suffer and die in the sense he did, to satisfy justice, and atone for sin; so neither do we yield obedience to the law, in order to obtain eternal life by it. By Christ's obedience for us, we are exempted from obedience to the law in this sense, but not from obedience to it, as a rule of walk and conversation, by which we may glorify God, and express our thankfulness to him, for his abundant mercies. Well then, it is what is commonly called Christ's active and passive obedience, together with the holiness of his nature, from whence all his obedience flows, which is the matter of our justification before God. Many things might be said in commendation of this glorious righteousness of the Mediator. The nature and excellency of it may be collected from the several names, or appellations, by which it is called in scripture.

1. It is called the righteousness of God; (Rom. 1:17 and 3:22) and that not only because it stands opposed to the righteousness of man, but because it was wrought out by one that is God, as well as man; and is greatly approved and graciously accepted of by God, and by him freely imputed to all his people, who are justified from all things by it in his sight.

2. It is called, the righteousness of one; (Rom. 5:18) that is, of one of the Persons of the Trinity; it is not the righteousness of the Father, nor of the Spirit, but of the Son, who though he is a partaker of two natures, yet is but one Person; it is the righteousness of one, who is a common head to all his seed, as Adam was to his. It may, indeed, be called the righteousness of many, even of all the saints, because it is imputed to them, and they all have an equal right to it; but yet the Author is

but one; and therefore we are not justified, partly by our own righteousness, and partly by Christ's; for then we should be justified by the righteousness of two, and not of one only.

3. It is called, the righteousness of the law; (Rom. 8:4) for though righteousness does not come by our obedience to the law, yet it does by Christ's obedience to it; though, by the deeds of the law, as performed by man, no flesh living can be justified, yet, by the deeds of the law, as performed by Christ, all the elect are justified. Christ's righteousness may be truly called a legal righteousness; it is what the law requires and demands, and is every way commensurate to it; it is a complete conformity to all its precepts; by it the law is magnified and made honourable. It is true, indeed, it makes no discovery of it, for it is manifested without the law, though witnessed to both by law and prophets; it is the gospel that is the ministration of it; for therein it is revealed from faith to faith.

4. It is called, the righteousness of faith; (Rom. 4:13) not that faith is our righteousness, either in whole, or in part; it is not the matter of our justification, as has been before observed; it has no manner of causal influence on it, nor is it imputed to us for it; but Christ's righteousness is called so, because faith receives it, puts it on, rejoices in it, and boasts of it.

5. It is called, the gift of righteousness, (Rom. 5:15-17) and a free gift, and a gift by grace; because it is freely wrought out by Christ, and freely imputed by God the Father, and faith is freely given to lay hold on it, and embrace it.

6. It is called, the best robe, or, as in the Greek text, the first robe; (Luke 15:22) for though Adam's robe of righteousness, in innocence, was first in wear, this was first provided in the covenant of grace; this was first in designation, though that was first in use; and it may well be called the best robe, because it is a better robe than ever sinful fallen man had; his being imperfect, and polluted, and insufficient to justify him before God, or screen him from divine justice, or secure him from divine wrath; yea, it is a better robe than ever Adam had in Eden, or the angels have in heaven for the righteousness of either of these, is but the righteousness of a creature, whereas this is the righteousness of God besides, the righteousness of Adam was a righteousness that might be lost, and

which was actually lost; for God made man upright, and he sought out many inventions, whereby he lost his righteousness; so that now there is none of Adam's posterity righteous in and of themselves; no, not one; and as for the righteousness of the angels, it is plain, it was a losable righteousness, for many of them left their first estate, and lost their righteousness; and the true reason why the others stand in theirs is, because of confirming grace from Christ; but Christ's righteousness is an everlasting one, and cannot, nor will it, ever be lost.

It is a righteousness which justice can find no fault with, but is entirely satisfied with; it justifies from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses; it secures from all wrath and condemnation, and silences all accusations; for who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth: It will answer for us in a time to come, and give us an admittance into God's kingdom and glory; when such that have no better righteousness than what the Scribes and Pharisees had, shall not enter there; and all that are without this wedding garment, shall be shut out., and cast into outer darkness, where is weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth. But I proceed,

IV. To consider the form of justification, which is by the imputation of this righteousness of Christ, I have been speaking of; even as David describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works. (Rom. 4:6) The Hebrew word צדקה, and the Greek words, λογίζομαι, ἐλλογέω, ἐλλογέομαι, which are used to express this act of imputation, signify to reckon, repute, estimate, attribute, or place any thing to the account of another; as when the apostle Paul said to Philemon, concerning Onesimus, If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on my account; (Philemon 18) τὸ ἐμοὶ ἐλλόμει, let it be reckoned or imputed to me; so when God is said to impute Christ's righteousness to us, the meaning is, that he reckons it as ours, being wrought out for us, and accounts us righteous by it, as though we had performed it in our own persons. And now, that it may appear that we are justified by the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, observe,

1. That we are in our own persons ungodly, who are justified, for God justifieth the ungodly; (Rom. 4:5) if ungodly, then without a righteousness, as all Adam's

posterity are; and if without a righteousness, then if we are justified, it must be by some righteousness imputed to us, or placed to our account; which can be no other than the righteousness of Christ.

2. We are justified either by an inherent, or by an imputed righteousness; not by an inherent one, because that is imperfect, and nothing that is imperfect can justify us. Besides, this is a righteousness within us, whereas the righteousness by which we are justified is a righteousness without us; it is unto all, and upon all them that believe. (Rom. 3:22) And, if we are not justified by an inherent righteousness, then it must be by an imputed one, because there remains no other.

3. The righteousness by which we are justified is not our own righteousness, but the righteousness of another, even the righteousness of Christ: That I may be found in Christ, says the apostle, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ. (Phil. 3:9) Now, the righteousness of another cannot be made ours, or we be justified by it, any other way than by an imputation of it.

4. The same way that Adam's sin becomes ours, or we are made sinners by it, the same way Christ's righteousness becomes ours, or we are made righteous by it. Now, Adam's sin becomes ours by imputation, and so does Christ's righteousness, according to the apostle: As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so, by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous.

5. The same way that our sins became Christ's, his righteousness becomes ours. Now our sins became Christ's by imputation only; the Father laid them on him by imputation, and he took them to himself by voluntary susception; they were placed to his account, and he looked upon himself as answerable to justice for them. Now, in the same way his righteousness becomes ours: For he, who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, 2 Corinthians 5:21. But I hasten,

V. To enquire into the date of justification, concerning which there have been various sentiments. Some have thought that it will not be completed until the day of judgment; others, that it commences at, or upon believing, and not before; others, that it took place at Christ's resurrection from the dead, when he

was justified, and all the elect in him; others, that it bears date from the time that Christ was first promised, as the Mediator, which was quickly after the fall: others carry it up as high as the covenant transactions between the Father and the Son, and the surety-ship engagements of Christ from eternity, which are the present sentiments of my mind. The method in which I shall endeavour to represent them to others, shall be as follows:

First, I shall endeavour to prove that that which is properly justification, is antecedent to any act of believing.

Secondly, That the justification, by, or at, or upon believing, is not properly justification.

Thirdly, Answer the objections made against this doctrine.

First, I shall endeavour to prove, that that which is properly justification, is before faith, or antecedent to any act of believing of ours; which, I apprehend, may be fairly concluded from the following considerations.

1. Faith is not the cause, but the fruit and effect of justification. The reason why we are justified, is not because we have faith; but the reason why we have faith is because we are justified. Was there no such blessing of grace as justification of life provided for the sons of men, there would be no such thing as faith in Christ bestowed upon them, nor, indeed, would there be any use for it; and though it is provided, yet since not for all men, therefore all men have not faith. The reason why some do not believe, is, because they are not of Christ's sheep; (John 10:26) they never were chosen in him, nor justified by him, but are justly left in their sins, and so to condemnation; the reason why others do believe, is, because they are ordained to eternal life, (Acts 13:48) have a justifying righteousness provided for them, and are justified by it, and shall never enter into condemnation and, in asserting this, I say no more than what Dr. Twisse, the famous Prolocutor to the Assembly of Divines, has said before me. His words are these: "Before faith the righteousness of Christ was ours, being in the intention of God the Father, and Christ the Mediator, wrought out for us; and, because wrought out for us, therefore God, in his own time, gives us grace of every kind, and among others, faith itself, and, at last, the crown of heavenly glory." And, a little after, he says: "Before faith and

repentance the righteousness of Christ is applied unto us; since it is on the account of that, that we obtain efficacious grace, to believe in Christ and repent." Likewise the judicious Pemble writes to the same effect, when, observing a two-fold justification, he says, the one is "In foro divino, in God's sight, and this goes before all our sanctification; for even whilst the elect are unconverted, they are then actually justified, and freed from all sin, by the death of Christ, and God so esteems of them as free, and, having accepted of that satisfaction, is actually reconciled to them. By this justification, we are freed from the guilt of our sins; and because that is done away, God, in due time, proceeds to give us the grace of sanctification, to free from sin's corruption still inherent in our persons." The other is, "In foro conscientiae, in their own sense, which is but the revelation and certain declaration of God's former secret act of accepting Christ's righteousness to our justification." And Maccovius says, "That because that God justifies us, therefore, he gives us faith, and other spiritual gifts." Now, if justification is the cause, and faith the effect; then, as every cause is before its effect, and every effect follows its own cause, justification must be before faith, and faith must follow justification.

2. Justification is the object, and faith is the act, which is conversant with it. Now the object does not depend upon the act, but the act upon the object. Every object is prior to the act, which is conversant with it; unless it be when an act gives being to the object, which cannot be the case here; unless we make faith to be the cause or matter of our justification, which has been already disproved. Faith is the evidence, not the cause of justification; and if it is an evidence, that of which it is an evidence must exist before it. Faith is indeed the evidence of things not seen; but it is not the evidence of things that are not: what the eye is in the body, that faith is in the soul. The eye, by virtue of its visive faculty beholds sensible objects, but does not produce them; and did they not previously exist, could not behold them. We see the sun shining in its brightness, but did it not exist before, it could not be visible to us; the same observation will hold good in ten thousand other instances. Faith is the hand which receives the blessing of justification from the Lord, and righteousness, by which the soul is justified from

the God of its salvation; but then this blessing must exist before faith can receive it. If any should think fit to distinguish between the act of justification, and the righteousness of Christ, by which we are justified; and object, That not justification, but the righteousness of Christ, is the object of faith; I reply, Either the righteousness of Christ, as justifying, is the object of faith, or it is not: if it is not, then it is useless, and to be laid aside in the business of justification; if, as justifying, it is the object of faith, what is it else but justification? Christ's righteousness justifying me, is my justification before God, and as such, my faith considers it, and says with the church, Surely, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength. (Isa. 45:24)

3. The elect of God are justified whilst ungodly, and therefore, before they believe; the reason of the consequence is plain, because a believer is not an ungodly person. That God's elect are, by nature ungodly, will not be denied; as such, Christ died for them; While we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. (Rom. 5:6) And it is as evident, that, as such, God justifies them: But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. (Rom. 4:5) Not that God justifies the ungodly without a righteousness; but he imputes and reckons to them the righteousness of his Son; for otherwise he would do that himself which he abhors in others: For he that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, they both are an abomination to the Lord. (Prov. 17:15) Nor does he justify them in their ungodliness, but from it; and indeed, from all things, from which they could not be justified, by the law of Moses; and yet he justifies them being ungodly. Now, if it can be proved that a believer is or may be called, an ungodly person, then there is no strength in my argument; but, I apprehend, it cannot be proved, from scripture, that a believer is so called; nor can any just reason be given why he should; seeing an ungodly person is one that is without God, that is, without the grace and fear of God; and without Christ, being destitute of a true knowledge of him, faith in him, and love to him; all which is incompatible with the character of a believer. I conclude then, that if God justifies his elect when they are ungodly, then he justifies them before they believe, which is the thing I have undertaken to prove.

4. All the elect of God were justified in, and with Christ, their Head and Representative, when he rose from the dead, and therefore before they believe. The Lord Jesus Christ having, from eternity engaged as a Surety for his people, all their sins were laid upon him, imputed to him, and placed to his account; for all which he was responsible to divine justice, and accordingly, in the fulness of time gave full satisfaction for them, by his sufferings and death; and having done this, was acquitted and discharged; for, as he was put to death in the flesh, he was justified in the Spirit. Now as he suffered and died not as a private person, but as a public one, so he rose again, and was justified as such. Hence, when he was justified, all those for whom he made satisfaction, and brought in a righteousness, were justified in him; which seems to be the meaning of that scripture, Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. (Rom. 4:25) This justification of the elect, at the resurrection of Christ, and upon the foot of the oblation and sacrifice, already offered up, is acknowledged by many excellent and judicious divines; some of whom, though they only allow a decretive justification from eternity; yet assert a real and complete one at the resurrection of Christ, on the account of his actual oblation and sacrifice. Dr. Ames says, that "The sentence of justification was, 1. As it were conceived in the mind of God, by the decree of justifying. 2. Pronounced in Christ our Head, when he arose from the dead." The learned Hoornekeek, summing up the tenets of the people called Antinomians in England, takes notice of their sentiments concerning justification; and observes, that the difference between them and others, "May easily be reconciled, by distinguishing justification into active and passive, the former, says he, is the act of God justifying; the latter the termination and application of it to the consciences of believers. The one was done at Christ's satisfaction; the other is, when a person actually believes." And a little after he adds; "Justification was designed for us from all eternity, in the decree of predestination; promised immediately after the fall: wrought at the death and resurrection of Christ, for these are to be joined together, Romans 8:34, being, at the one, merited by Christ, and, at the other, declared and ratified by God." Witsius, who engaged as a Moderator in the Antinomian and

Neonomian controversies, moved here in England says: "Christ verily was justified, when God raised him from the dead, and gave him an acquittance for the payment made by Christ, and accepted by him: And the same Christ was raised again for our justification, Romans 4:25. For when he was justified, the elect were justified together in him; for as much as he was their Representative." And, not to forget our great Dr. Goodwin, who observes, that "At the instant when he, that is, Christ, arose, God then performed a farther act of justification towards him, and us in him; admitting him, as our advocate, into the actual possession of justification of life; acquitting him from all those sins, which he had charged upon him. Therefore we read, that as Christ was made sin in his life and death, so that he was justified also, 1 Timothy 3:16. And that he should be thus justified, is not spoken of him, abstractly considered in himself, but as he hath us conjoined in him, and as he connotes us." And a little after he says: "As when he ascended, we ascended with him, (and therefore we are said now to sit together with him in heavenly places,

Eph. 2:6) so when he was justified, we are justified also in him. And as it may be said, Adam condemned us all, and corrupted us all when he fell; so did Christ then perfect us all, and God justified us all, when he died and rose again." Some divines call this a virtual justification: the phrase I confess, is unintelligible to me. The famous Parker calls it an actual justification, both of Christ and us. His words are these: "Christ is said to be justified when he rose again, 1 Timothy 3:16, and we to be then justified in him, Romans 4:25, because the discharge, that is, his Father's raising him up, was an actual justification of him from the sins of others, for which he had satisfied, and of us from our own sins, for which he became a surety." Those who assert there is no justification before faith, ought duly to consider this argument, so well founded in scripture, and so agreeable to the sentiments of great and good men. But,

5. I shall go a step higher, and endeavour to prove, that all the elect of God are justified from eternity. When, I say, the elect of God are justified from eternity, I do not think, that they had an actual personal existence from eternity, though they had a representative one in Christ; or that an actual payment

of their debts, or an actual satisfaction for their sins was then made by Christ, though he engaged to do it; nor do I intend justification from eternity, in such a sense, as to set aside the imputation of Adam's sin to the condemnation of the elect in him; or to render Christ's bringing in an actual righteousness in time unnecessary; or to make faith useless in our justification, in our own consciences, as, I hope, I shall shortly make appear; yet, on the other hand, I mean more by justification from eternity, than merely God's prescience, or foreknowledge of it, to whom all works are known, from the beginning of the world, ἀπ' αἰῶνος, from eternity; (Acts 15:18) more than a mere resolution and purpose to justify his elect in time, he calling things that are not, as though they were; (Rom. 4:17) or, in other words, more than a decretive justification, as some divines call it; who apprehend that God's elect can, in no other sense, be said to be justified from eternity, than they may be said to be sanctified or glorified from eternity, because he had decreed to sanctify and glorify them: I say, I mean more than thus, and assert, with Dr. Ames, that justification "is a sentence conceived in the mind of God, by the decree of justification;" that this is an act in God, all whose acts in him are eternal; that this is the grand original sentence of justification; of which that pronounced on Christ, as our representative, when he rose from the dead, and that which is pronounced by the Spirit of God in the conscience of believers, as well as that which will be pronounced before men and angels, at the general judgment, are no other than so many repetitions, or renewed declarations; that this includes the whole complete esse of justification; being, as Mr. Rutherford observes, "An eternal and immanent act in God, and not transient upon an external subject. Of which sort, adds he, are the acts of election and reprobation, which have their whole complete being before the persons elected, reprobated, or justified, either begin to be, live or believe, or do any thing good or evil." In a word, I apprehend, that as God's eternal decree of election of persons to everlasting life, is the eternal election of them, so God's will, decree, or purpose, to justify his elect, is the eternal justification of them; though his eternal will to sanctify them is not an eternal sanctification of them; because sanctification is a work of God's grace

upon us, and within us, and so requires our personal existence. Justification is an act of God's grace towards us, is wholly without us, entirely resides in the divine mind, and lies in his estimation, accounting and constituting us righteous, through the righteousness of his Son; and so required neither the actual existence of Christ's righteousness, nor of our persons, but only that both should certainly exist in time. For the further confirmation and illustration of this truth, let the following things be observed:

(1.) That there is an eternal election of persons to everlasting life, and that the objects of justification are God's elect: Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth. (Rom. 8:33) Now, if God's elect, as such, can have nothing laid to their charge, but are, by God, acquitted, discharged, and justified; and, if they bore this character of elect from eternity, or were chosen in Christ before the world began, then they must be acquitted, discharged, and justified by God from eternity, so as nothing could be laid to their charge. Besides, electing grace before the world began, put them in Christ: he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. (Eph 1:4) And if electing grace then put them in him, they must be considered in Christ as an unrighteous person, or as unjustified, or as in a state of condemnation. And, I think, we may be allowed to argue an eternal justification from eternal election, since eternal justification is a branch of it; and, as such, as one observes, "Is the Father's eternal purpose and agreement with the Son, that the elect should be everlastingly righteous in his sight, in the righteousness of this dear Son of his; in which act he constituted and ordained them so to be." And his act, as the same excellent person observes, is no other than "setting apart the elect alone to be partakers of Christ's righteousness, and setting apart Christ's righteousness for the elect only." It think we may safely conclude, that if there is an eternal election of persons in Christ, there must be an eternal acceptance and justification of them in him; since as he always was the beloved Son of his Father, in whom he is ever well pleased, so he always has graciously accepted of, and is well pleased with all his elect in him.

(2.) That there was, from all eternity, a covenant of grace and peace made between the Father and the

Son, on the account of these elect persons; when all the blessings of grace, and promises of life, provided and secured in that covenant, were put into the hands of Jesus Christ for his people; and though they had then no personal or actual existence, yet they had a representative Being in Christ, in whom they were then blessed with all spiritual blessings. (Eph. 1:3) And, if with all spiritual blessings, then with this of justification; which was no inconsiderable part of that grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. (2 Tim. 1:9) But I cannot express this better than in the words of Dr. Goodwin, who speaking of the date of justification, says: "The first progress, or step, was at the first covenant-making and striking of the bargain from all eternity: we may say, of all spiritual blessings in Christ, what is said of Christ, that his goings forth are from everlasting. Justified then we were, when first elected, though not in our own persons, yet in our Head, as he had our persons then given him, and we came to have a being and interest in him: You are in Christ, (saith the apostle) and so we had the promise made of all spiritual blessings in him, and he took all the deeds of all in our name; so in Christ we were blessed with all spiritual blessings, Ephesians 1:3. As we are blessed with all other, and with this also, that we were justified then in Christ. To this purpose is that place, Romans 8:30, where he speaks of all those blessings which are applied to us after redemption, as calling, justification, glorification, as of things already past and done, even then when he did predestinate us: whom he hath predestinated, them he hath called, them he hath justified, them he hath glorified. He speaks it as in the time past; neither speaks he thus of these blessings, as past simply in regard of that presence, in which all things stand before him from eternity; all things past, present, and to come, being to him as present: nor doth he speak it only in regard of a resolution, or purpose, taken up to call and justify, he calling things that are not as though they were, Romans 4:17. For thus it may be said, of all his other works towards the creatures in common, that he hath created and preserved them from everlasting: but in a more special relation are these blessings decreed, said to have been bestowed, because, though they existed not in themselves, yet they existed really in a Head that represented them and us, who was by

to answer for them, and to undertake for them, which other creatures could not do; and there was an actual donation and receiving of all these for us, (as truly as a feoffee in trust may take lands for one unborn) by virtue of a covenant made with Christ; whereby Christ had all our sins imputed to him, and so taken off from us, Christ having then covenanted to take all our sins upon him, when he took our persons to be his; and God having covenanted not to impute sin unto us, but to look at him for the payment of all, and at us as discharged. Of this seems that place, 2 Corinthians 5:19, evidently to speak, as importing that everlasting transaction; God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself not imputing their trespasses to them, that is, not imputing them then when he was reconciling us unto himself in Christ. So as then God told Christ, as it were, (for it was a real covenant) that he would look for his debt and satisfaction of him, and that he did let the sinners go free; and so they are, in this respect, justified from all eternity. And, indeed, if the promise of life was then given us, (as the apostle Paul speaks, Titus 1:2) then also justification of life, without which we could not come to life. Yet this is but the inchoation, though it be an estating us into the whole tenure of life."

(3.) Christ was set up from everlasting, as the Mediator of this covenant: his goings forth, and acting therein, on the behalf of his people, were of old, from everlasting. He then engaged to be a surety for them, and was accepted of by God the Father as such; who thence forward, to use the Doctor's words, just now cited, looked for his debt, and expected satisfaction of him, and let the sinners go free, for whom he engaged. Looking at him for the payment, he looked at them as discharged; and they were so in his eternal mind, and, in this respect, were justified from eternity. And indeed, it is a rule that will hold good, "That as soon as any one becomes a surety for another, the other is immediately freed, if the surety be accepted;" which is the case here. And it is certainly most prudential, when a man has a bad debt, and has good security for it, to have his eye upon the bondsman or surety for payment, and not upon the principal debtor, who will never be able to pay him.

(4.) That as soon as Christ became a surety, the sins of all those persons, for whom he became a surety, were

reckoned and accounted to him; and, if accounted to him, then not to them; if they were laid to his charge, then not to theirs; and, if he was answerable for them, then they were discharged from them. If there was an imputation of them to him, then there must be a non-imputation of them to them; which the apostle plainly intimates, when he says, God was in Christ, that is, from everlasting, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. (2 Cor. 5:9) Witsius, citing this text of scripture, says: "God hath reconciled the whole world of his elect to himself, and hath declared that he will not impute their trespasses to them, and that because of the consummate satisfaction of Christ, 2 Corinthians 5:19, wherefore, says he, I am of opinion, that this act of God may be called the general justification of the elect." Nor ought it to be thought strange, foreign, or far-fetched, that the justification of God's people is inferred from the imputation of their sins to Christ, and the non-imputation of them to them; since the apostle Paul, in Romans 4:6-8, has so manifestly deduced, and strongly concluded the imputation of righteousness, which is the ratio formulis of justification, from the non-imputation of sin, and remission of it.

(5.) That God from eternity willed to punish sin, not in the persons of the elect, but in the person of Christ their surety. That it is the will of God to punish sin, not in his people, but in his Son, is plain and manifest, from his setting him up (Rom. 3:25) in his purpose, to be a propitiation for their sins; from his sending him forth in the likeness of sinful flesh; to condemn sin in the flesh; and from his being made both sin and a curse for them, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him. This will was notified to man quickly after the fall, though it did not then begin, for no new will can arise in God; he wills nothing in time, but what he willed from eternity. If it was God's eternal will not to punish sin in his people, but in his Son, then they were eternally discharged, acquitted from sin, and secured from everlasting wrath and destruction; and, if they were eternally discharged from sin, and freed from punishment, they were eternally justified. Dr. Twisse makes the very quiddity or essence, of justification and remission of sins, which he takes to be the same, to lie in God's will not to punish. His words are these: "Forgiveness of sin, if you regard the quiddity of it, is

no other than a negation of punishment, or a will not to punish: be it therefore, that to forgive sin is no other than to will not to punish; why, this will not to punish, as it is an immanent act in God, was from eternity.”

(6.) That the saints under the Old Testament were justified by the same righteousness of Christ, as the saints under the New; and that before the oblation, or sacrifice, was actually offered up, or the everlasting righteousness was actually brought in; before an actual payment of debts was made, or an actual satisfaction for sins given. For Christ’s blood, when it was shed, was shed for the remission of sins that were past. (Rom. 3:25, 26; Heb. 9:15) And his death was for the redemption of transgressions that were under the first Testament. Now if God could, and did, actually justify some, having taken his Son’s word as their surety, upon a view of his future righteousness, three or four thousand years before this righteousness was actually wrought out; why could he not, and why may it not be thought that he did, justify all his elect from eternity, viewing the same future righteousness of Christ, which he had engaged to work out for them, and which he knew full well he would work out; since, though they had not then an actual, yet they had a representative Being in Christ their Head? But I proceed,

Secondly, To shew that the justification, which is by, at, or upon believing, is not properly justification, but the manifestation of it. The phrase we frequently meet with in scripture, of being justified by faith, must be understood either in a proper or in an improper sense: those who understand it in a proper sense, make the *tò credere*, or the act of faith, to be imputed for justification; or, in other words, to be the matter of it; or to be accepted of God in the room of a legal righteousness: this is the way the Papists, Socinians, and Remonstrants take. On the other hand, sound Protestant divines understand the phrase in an improper, tropical, or metonymical sense; and say, that faith intends neither the habit, nor the act of faith because then our justification would be placed in that which is a part, and a principal part of sanctification; nor would there be a proper antithesis, or opposition, between faith and works, in the business of justification: therefore by faith they understand, and very rightly, the object of faith, as in Galatians 3:23. But before faith came, &c. that is, before Christ, the Object of faith,

came: so that we may be said to be justified by faith objectively, the act of faith being put for the object of it; the reason of which is, because it is to faith that this object is revealed. Faith is the recipient of it; it is the grace by which the soul lays hold on, apprehends, and embraces Christ’s righteousness, as its justifying righteousness before God. So that when we are said to be justified by faith, it is to be understood not in a proper, but in an improper, tropical, or metonymical, sense; faith being not our justification itself, but the evidence of it. For Faith adds nothing to the *esse*, but to the *bene esse* of justification. Justification is a complete act in God’s eternal mind, without the being or consideration of faith; that is to say, God does not justify any because they believe in Christ, nor on the foresight of their future faith in him. A man is not more justified after faith, than he is before faith, in God’s account; and, after he has believed, his justification does not depend upon his acts of faith; for though we believe not, yet he abides faithful (2 Tim. 2:13) to his covenant-engagements with his Son. Faith, indeed, is of great use for our comfortable apprehension of it; without this grace we neither know, nor can claim, our interest in it; nor enjoy that peace of conscience, which is the happy result of it. But

Faith has no manner of causal influence upon our justification. It is not the impulsive, or moving cause of it, for that is the grace of God; nor the efficient cause of it, for it is God that justifies; nor is it the matter of it, for that is the obedience and blood of Christ; nor is it an instrument, or instrumental cause of it, which is no other than a less principal efficient cause. For, as Mr. Baxter himself well argues, “if faith be the instrument of our justification, it is the instrument either of God, or man. Not of man, for justification is God’s act; he is the sole Justifier, Romans 3:26, man doth not justify himself: nor of God, for it is not God that believeth.” Nor is it *causa sine qua non*, or that without which a man cannot be justified in the sight of God. For, I hope, I have already proved, that all God’s elect are justified in his sight, and in his account, before faith; and if before faith, then without it. Besides, all elect infants, dying in infancy, are completely justified, who are not capable of the *tò credere*, or act of believing in Christ, whatever may be said for the habit or faith in them.

Faith is the sense, perception, and evidence of our justification. Christ's righteousness, as justifying, is revealed from faith to faith. It is that grace whereby the soul, in the light of the divine Spirit, beholds a complete righteousness in Christ, having seen its guilt, pollution, and misery when it is enabled to renounce its own righteousness, and submit to the righteousness of Christ; which it puts on by faith, as its garment of justification: which it rejoices in, and gives him the glory of; the Spirit of God bearing witness with his Spirit, that he is a justified Person, And so he comes to be evidently and declaratively justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

Now neither the manifestation of justification to our consciences, by the Spirit of God; nor our sense and perception of it by faith, are properly our justification: for they both relate to some prior act or sentence, wherein the very essence of the thing lies. The pardon of a criminal is complete, when signed and sealed by the king. Neither the act of bringing it to the criminal, nor his act of receiving it, is his pardon; though both are necessary to his knowledge of it, and to his pleading it in court, as well as to the peace, quiet, and satisfaction of his mind. When a man is justified and acquitted in court, and hath the copy of his indictment given him, who will say the copy of his indictment is his justification or acquittance, and not the judgment and act of the court? For a man may be truly and legally acquitted, and yet not have a copy of his indictment. For a man to have the copy of his indictment may be of great service in some cases, and be a good testimonial of his acquittance; but it is not the thing itself. Just so, neither the intimation of the sentence of justification, made to our consciences by 'the Spirit of God; nor our sense and perception of it by faith, so intimated, is, strictly and properly speaking, our justification: for, if they were, then believers themselves might be without it, since they may be with out those intimations of the blessed Spirit, and a comfortable sense and perception of their justification by faith which seems to be the case of David, when he said, Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit. (Ps. 51:12)

What I have now said, I think, perfectly agrees not only with the scriptures of truth, but with what some of the best and soundest divines have said on

this subject. I have already observed that Dr. Ames says, that "The testimony of the Spirit is not so properly justification, as it is an actual perception of it before granted." As also what the judicious Pemble has asserted, when speaking of justification in foro conscientiae, he says: It is "but the revelation and certain declaration of God's former secret act of accepting Christ's righteousness to our justification." Besides these, give me leave to add one or two testimonies more. Maccovius, speaking of the Arminian tenet, "That we are not justified before we believe," observes, that this mistake arises from their not allowing the distinction of active and passive justification, which he proves thus: "It is said of God that he justifieth, Romans 4:5, and of us, that we are justified, chapter 5. Not that there is a twofold justification; for passive justification, says he, is improperly called justification, and is only the sense of active justification." Mr. Rutherford says, that "Justification taken passively, or in the termination of it, is to declare a man both living, and actually believing, righteous, by a judicious act, terminated upon the conscience of a guilty sinner, cited before the tribunal of God, and convicted of sin; in which law-suit the sinner is absolved, and actually perceives and apprehends the declared absolution, and by a fiducial stay relies on Christ, now reaching out the manifestation of this sentence: yet, says he, justification in this form of speech, so usual in the scriptures, does not suppose any new will in God, beginning in time, as the Arminians with their own Socinus assert; but an intimation of God's eternal will, now made to the conscience." I will conclude this head with the words of Dr. Twisse: "Justification and absolution, as they signify an immanent act of the divine will, are from eternity: but the external notification of the same will and manner of a judicial and forensic absolution, which is made by the Word and Spirit, at the tribunal of every one's conscience, is that imputation of Christ's righteousness, remission of sins, justification and absolution, which follow faith. For hereupon absolution is pronounced, as it were by the mouth of a judge, and so that internal purpose of absolving, which was from eternity, is made manifest." But I shall now go on,

Thirdly, To consider the objections which are made against this doctrine.

1. It is objected, that persons cannot be justified before they exist; they must be, before they can be justified; and this is strengthened with some old trite philosophical maxims: as, *Non entis nulla sunt accidentia, nullæ affectiones; accidentis esse, est inesse*; “No accidents can be predicated of a non-entity; no affections can be ascribed to it, &c.” To which I answer, with Maccovius, That this is true of non-entities that have neither an *esse actu*, nor an *esse cognitum*; that have neither an actual being, nor is it certain, or known, that they shall have any future being. But God’s elect, though they have not an *esse actu*, an actual being from eternity, yet they have an *esse cognitum*; it is certain by the prescience and fore-knowledge of God, that they shall have one; for known unto God are all his works from eternity. (Acts 15:1) Besides, they have an *esse repræsentativm*, a representative being in Christ; which is more than other creatures have, whose future existences are certain; and therefore they were blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ, before the foundation of the world; (Eph. 1:3) and had grace given them in Christ before the world began. (2 Tim. 1:9) Moreover, “Justification is a moral act, which does not require the present existence of the subject; it is enough that it shall exist some time or other.” It is, indeed, granted, that justification taken passively, as it is declared to, and passes upon the conscience, by the Spirit of God, and is received by faith: that this requires the actual existence of the subject on whom it terminates; but we are not speaking of justification as a transient, but as an immanent act; not as received by us, but as it is in God, who justifies.

2. It is objected, that if God’s elect are justified from eternity, then they were not only justified before they themselves existed, but also from that which, as yet, was not committed, that is, sin; and it seems absurd to say, that they are justified from sins, before they were committed, or any charge was brought against them for sin. To which I answer; it is no more absurd to say, that God’s elect are justified from their sins, before they were committed, than it is to say, that their sins were imputed to Christ, and laid upon him, as he was delivered up to justice, and died for them, before they were committed. And as this will not be denied by those, who believe the substitution of Christ in the room and stead of the elect, the imputation of their sins to him, and his plenary satisfaction to divine

justice for them, by his sufferings and death; so it is an answer which ought to be satisfactory to them.

3. It is suggested, “That justification strictly speaking, cannot be said to be from eternity, because the decree of justification is one thing, and justification itself another; even as God’s will to save and sanctify is one thing, and salvation and sanctification itself another; and therefore, though the decree is from eternity the thing itself is not.” To which I reply: That as God’s decree to elect certain persons to everlasting life and salvation, is his election of them to everlasting life and salvation; so his decree, will, and purpose to justify any, is his justification of them: for by, or through the decree of justification, as Dr. Ames expresses it, (which was before observed) the sentence of justification was conceived in God’s mind; and, being there conceived, was complete and perfect. God’s will, not to impute sin to his people, is the non-imputation of it to them; and his will to impute Christ’s righteousness, is the imputation of it to them, The same may be said of all God’s immanent acts of grace concerning us; such as election, &c. Which are entirely within himself, and do not require that the object should exist; only that it certainly shall exist some time or other; but this cannot be said of transient acts, which produce a real, physical and inherent change upon the subject. It is one thing for God to will to act an act of grace concerning us, and another thing to will to work a work of grace in us. God’s will in the former instance, is his act; in the latter it is not: wherefore though God’s will to justify is justification itself, because justification is a complete act, in his eternal mind without us: yet his will to sanctify is not sanctification, because this is a work wrought in us. Hence it appears, that there is not the same reason to say, we were created, called, sanctified or glorified from eternity; as to say, that we were justified from eternity. Because, as Mr. Eyres observes; “These import an inherent change in the person created, called, glorified; which forgiveness does not, it being perfect and complete in the mind of God:” by which he means justification.

4. It is observed, That the apostle Paul, in recounting the several blessings of divine grace, in his famous chain of salvation, Romans 8:30, places vocation before justification, as something antecedent to it; from whence it is concluded, that vocation is, in order of time, before justification. To which I reply: That the order of things is frequently inverted in scripture.

The Jews have a saying, That “there is neither first nor last in the law,” that is, it does not always observe to put that first which is first; and that last which is last; but frequently changes the order; so that nothing strictly is to be concluded from thence. And as this is obvious in the law, and in the other writings of the Old Testament, so it is in the books of the New Testament; where it is easy to observe, that the order of the three Persons in the Trinity is not always kept to. Sometimes the Son is placed before the Father, and sometimes the Holy Spirit is mentioned before the Father and Son. And though this may well express the equality there is between them; yet it ought not to be urged, to confound the order among them. But to consider the instance of vocation before us: let it be observed, that this is sometimes placed before election, as in 2 Peter 1:10, Make your calling and election sure. And yet none but an Arminian, and scarcely such an one, will infer from hence, that vocation, or calling, is before election. And, on the other hand, salvation is placed before vocation, 2 Timothy 1:9, Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling. From whence it may be as strongly concluded, that salvation, and so justification, is before vocation, as that vocation is before justification from the other text. If, indeed, by justification is meant the declarative sentence of it upon the conscience, by the Spirit of God, and received by faith, it will be allowed, that it follows vocation, and that vocation precedes it.

5. “The several passages of scripture, where we are said to be justified by, or through faith, are urged, as declaring faith to be a prerequisite to justification; which cannot be, say they, if justification was from eternity.” To which I answer: That those places of scripture, which speak of justification, by, or through faith, do not militate against, nor disprove justification before faith: for though justification before, and by faith differ; yet they are not opposite and contradictory: yea, justification by, or through faith; supposes justification before faith. For if there was no justification before faith, there can be none by it, without making faith the cause or condition of it. As to those places of scripture, which speak of justification by, or through faith, declaring faith to be prerequisite to justification, I reply: If by a prerequisite, is meant a prerequisite to the being of justification, it is denied that those scriptures teach any such thing; for faith adds nothing to the being of justification:

but if by it, is meant a prerequisite to the sense and knowledge of it, or to a claim of interest in it, it will be allowed to be the sense of them. But a learned author says: That “to refer them to a sense of justification only, is weak and foreign to the mind of the apostle Paul.” But I must beg leave to differ from him, till some reasons are given why it is so. But let us a little consider some of the scriptures which are insisted on. Perhaps the words of my text may be thought to stare me in the face and to furnish out an objection against justification, before faith; when the apostle says, And by him all that believe are justified. From whence it can only be inferred: that all who believe are justified persons, which no body denies; and they may be justified before they believe, for aught that the apostle here says. And if any one should think fit to infer from hence, that those who believe not, are not justified, it will be allowed that they are not declaratively, or evidentially justified: that they do not know that they are; that they cannot receive any comfort from it, nor claim any interest in justification; but that they are not justified in God’s sight, or in Christ the Mediator, cannot be proved. Again, the apostle in 1 Corinthians 6:11, says of the Corinthians, that they were now justified, as if they were not justified before. But this I conceive, does not at all militate against justification before faith: for they might be justified in foro Dei, and in their Head, Christ Jesus, before now, and yet not till now be justified in their own consciences, and by the Spirit of God; which, it is plain, is the justification the apostle is here speaking of. But the grand text, which is urged to prove justification a consequent of faith, is Galatians 2:16. Even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ. Here the apostle is speaking of justification, as it terminates upon the conscience of a believer; and this is readily granted to follow faith, and to be a consequent of it; for that none are justified by faith until they believe, is acknowledged by all. The apostle’s meaning then is, that we have believed in Christ, or have looked to him for justification, that we might have the comfortable sense and apprehension of it, through faith in him; or that we may appear to be justified, or to expect justification alone by his righteousness, received by faith, and not by the works of the law. In the same light may many other scriptures, of the same kind, be considered.

6. It is urged: “That justification cannot be from

eternity, but only in time, when a man actually believes and repents; because else it would follow, that he, who is justified, and consequently hath passed from death to life, and is become a child of God, and an heir of eternal life, abides still in death, and is a child of wrath; because he who is not converted, and lies in sin, abideth in death, 1 John 3:14, and is of the devil, 1 John 3:8. and in a state of damnation, Galatians 5:21.” In order to solve this seeming difficulty, let it be observed, That God’s elect may be considered under two different Heads, and as related to two different covenants at one and the same time. As they are the descendants of Adam, they are related to him, as a covenant-head, and as such, sinned in him; and, through his offence judgment came upon them all to condemnation; and so they are all, by nature, children of wrath, even as others. But then, as considered in Christ, they were loved with an everlasting love: God chose them in him before the foundation of the world; and always viewed and accounted them righteous in Christ, in whom they were eternally secured from eternal wrath and damnation. So that it is no contradiction to say, that the elect of God, as they are in Adam, and according to the covenant of works, are under the sentence of condemnation; and that as they are in Christ, and according to the covenant of grace, and the secret transactions thereof, they are justified and freed from all condemnation. This is no more a contradiction, than that they are loved with an everlasting love, and yet are children of wrath at one and the same time, as they certainly are. And again, this is no more a contradiction, than that Jesus Christ was the Object of his Father’s love and wrath at one and the same time; sustaining two different capacities, and standing in two different relations when he suffered in the room and stead of his people.

7. It is objected, that this doctrine makes assurance to be of the essence of faith. And, indeed, I think, that assurance, in some degree or other of it, is essential to faith: but then by this I do not mean such an assurance as excludes all doubts and fears, and admits of no allay of unbelief; which the apostle calls, The full assurance of faith, (Heb. 10:22) and is the highest degree thereof. Nor do I intend assurance in so low a sense, as the mere assurance of the object; for this may be in devils, in hypocrites, and formal professors: but I mean an

assurance of the object with relation to a man’s self in particular. As for instance: That faith by which a man is said to be justified, is not a mere assurance of the object, or a bare persuasion that there is a justifying righteousness in Christ; but that there is a justifying righteousness in Christ for him; and therefore he looks unto, leans, relies, and depends on, and pleads this righteousness for his justification: though this act of his may be attended with many doubts, fears, questionings, and unbelief. And what is short of this I cannot apprehend to be true faith in Christ, as the Lord our righteousness.

8. It is objected: That if justification is before faith, then there is no need of faith; it is a vain and useless thing. To which I answer, that though faith does not justify us, it being neither the whole, nor a part of our justifying righteousness, nor the cause or condition of our justification; yet, as it apprehends and receives Christ’s righteousness for our justification, it brings much peace, joy, and comfort into our hearts. The awakened sinner, before faith is wrought in his soul, or be enabled to exercise it on Christ, finds himself in a state of bondage, and under a sentence of condemnation; as he really is, as a descendant of Adam, and according to the open rules of God’s word: so that there is nothing else but a fearful expectation of fiery indignation to consume him. But when the Spirit of God brings near Christ’s righteousness, and puts it into the hand of faith, and declares the justifying sentence of God, upon the account of that righteousness, in the conscience, his mind is unfettered, his soul is set at liberty, and filled with a joy unspeakable and full of glory. So that faith is just of the same usefulness in this respect, as a condemned malefactor’s actually receiving the king’s pardon into his own hand is to him; when, in consequence of this, he is not only delivered from prison and confinement, and all the miseries which attended such a state; but also freed from all those fears, terrors, horrors, and tortures of mind, which arose from his daily expectation of just punishment. In fine, justification is by faith, and in a way of receiving, as the whole of salvation is, That it might be by grace, that is, that it might appear to be of grace, and not of works. Thus have I freely given my thoughts concerning justification, both before and at believing, and have endeavoured to remove the objections made against it. I leave what I have said to the blessing of God, and pass on,

VI. To consider the objects of justification, who are God's elect: (Rom. 8:33, 34) Who shall lay any, thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifies, that is, his elect; who are described,

1. By their number: They are many: By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many. (Isa. 53:11) And, by the obedience of one many are made righteous. (Rom. 5:19) Jesus Christ engaged as a surety for many, and gave his life a ransom for many, (Matthew 20:28, Heb. 9:28) and was offered up to bear the sins of many; which is the true reason why many are justified by him. Many are brought to believe on him for life and salvation, even as many as were ordained to eternal life; (Acts 13:48) and many sons, in consequence of all this, will be brought to glory: Many shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 8:12; John 14:2) And hence there are many mansions in Christ's Father's house preparing for them. This leads us to observe,

(1.) That they are not a few who are justified by Christ. Though Christ's flock is but a little flock, in comparison of the world's goats; though Christ's people are but, few in comparison of the vast number of hypocrites and formal professors; (for many are called, but few chosen; (Matthew 20:16; Luke 13:24) many strive to enter in at the strait gate, but few there be that enter in at it;) yet, considered in themselves, they are a great number, which no man can number. Now this serves to magnify the grace of God, to exalt the satisfaction and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to encourage distressed souls to seek and look to Christ for righteousness; seeing it is wrought out for many, and many are justified by it. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, they shall be filled. (Matthew 5:6)

(2.) This shews that all mankind are not justified. Though they are many who are justified, yet they are not all. For all men have not faith to receive Christ's righteousness; nor are all men saved, as they would be, if they were justified: for those who are justified by his blood, shall be saved from wrath through him. (Rom. 5:9) Yet all the elect are justified: For in him shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory. (Isa. 45:25)

2. The objects of justification are described by the

quality of them, or by their state and condition. Before conversion, they are represented as ungodly; and after conversion, as believers in Christ. Thus, in our text: All that believe are justified. By whom we are to understand, not nominal believers, or such who only profess to believe in Christ; but real ones, who with the heart believe unto righteousness, and whose faith works by love to Christ and to his people. But I go on,

VII. To mention the several effects of justification, which are these following:

1. A freedom from all penal evils in this life, and that which is to come. A justified person shall never enter into condemnation; his afflictions in this life are not, strictly speaking, punishments for sins, but fatherly chastisements. They are not inflicted in a way of vindictive wrath, or that by bearing them they should make satisfaction for their sins; for this would highly reflect on the justice of God, be a lessening of the satisfaction of Christ, and contrary to the whole gospel-declaration.

2. Peace with God is another consequent, or effect of justification: Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, (Rom. 5:1) that is, peace of conscience, which passeth all understanding, and is one of the most valuable blessings of life.

3. Access to God through Christ with confidence is another effect of it. A justified person can go to God, in the name and strength of Christ, with much boldness, making mention of his righteousness, and of his only; and use much freedom at the throne of grace, in asking for such things as he stands in need of.

4. Acceptance of person and service with God, through Christ, follows upon our justification. God is well pleased with his righteousness, and, for the sake of it, with all his people. Their persons are accepted in the beloved, and their sacrifices and services are also acceptable to God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

5. Adoption is another consequent of justification: for though this blessing was originally provided, bestowed, and secured in predestination; yet way is made for our actual reception of it, by our redemption, which is in Christ Jesus; who hath redeemed them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of children. (Gal. 4:5) hence Junius calls Justification via adoptionis, the way to adoption.

6. Sanctification is also an effect of justification:

faith, as has been already shewn, follows upon it, and is a very considerable part of sanctification. In fine, certainty of salvation, which may be strongly concluded from our justification, and an undoubted title to the glorious inheritance; yea, the full possession of it arise from it, and depend upon it: for whom he justified, them he also glorified. (Rom. 8:30) But I proposed only to mention these things therefore proceed to the

VIII. And last thing, which is to consider the several properties of justification.

1. It is an act of God's free Grace: Being justified freely by his grace. (Rom. 3:24) It was grace that resolved on, and fixed the scheme and method of justification: and which called and moved Christ to engage as a surety for his people; and which sent him, in the fulness of time, to work out a righteousness for them. And then it was grace in God to accept of this righteousness for them, and to impute it to them, and bestow faith on them to receive it; especially will all this appear to be free grace, when it is considered that these persons are all by nature sinners, and ungodly ones; yea, many of them the chief of sinners.

2. It is universal and not partial. All God's elect are justified, and that from all things, as in our text, that is, from all their sins, and are freed from all that punishment which is due unto them. The whole righteousness of Christ is imputed to them; by being hereby justified, they are perfect and complete in him.

3. It is an individual act, which is done at once, and admits of no degrees. The sins of God's elect were laid at once on Christ, and he made satisfaction for them at once. God accepted of Christ's righteousness, and imputed it at once unto his people, who all have their sins and transgressions forgiven at once. The sense of justification, indeed, admits of degrees: for the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; (Rom. 1:17) but justification itself does not. There are several fresh declarations, or manifestations, or repetitions of the act of justification; as at the resurrection of Christ; and again, by the testimony of the Spirit to the conscience of the believer; and last of all, at the general judgment, before men and angels. But justification, as it is an act of God, is but one, and is done at once, and admits of no degrees; and is not carried on in a gradual and progressive way as sanctification is.

4. It is equal to all, or all are alike justified. The same price was paid for the redemption of one, as for another; and the same righteousness is imputed to one, as to another; and, like precious faith, is given to one, as to another though not to all in the same degree, yet the weakest believer is as much justified as the strongest, and the greatest sinner as the smallest. Though one man may have more sanctifying grace than another, yet no man has more justifying righteousness than another.

5. It is irreversible and unalterable. It is according to an immutable decree, which can never be frustrated. It is one of God's gifts, which are without repentance: it is one of the blessings of the covenant of grace, which can never be broken. The righteousness by which the saints are justified is an everlasting one; and that faith, by which they receive it, shall never fail: And though a righteous man may fall into sin, yet he shall never fall from his righteousness, nor shall he ever enter into condemnation, but be eternally glorified.

6. Justification, though it frees persons from sin, and discharges them from punishment due unto it, yet it does not take sin out of them. By it, indeed, they are freed from sin, insomuch that God sees no iniquity in them to condemn them for it. Though he sees and beholds all the sins of his people, in articulo providentiæ, in respect of providence, and chastises them for them; yet in articulo justificationis, in respect of justification, he sees none in them; they being acquitted, discharged, and justified from all. Nevertheless sin dwells in them For there is not a just man upon earth that liveth and sinneth not. (Eccl. 7:20)

7. It does not destroy the law, nor discourage a careful performance of good works. It does not destroy the law, or make it void; no, it establishes it; for the righteousness by which we are justified, is every way commensurate to the demands of the law; by it the law is magnified, and made honourable. Nor are persons, by this doctrine, discouraged from the performance of good works; for this doctrine of grace teaches men, That denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, they should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world. (Titus 2:11, 12) To conclude: If your souls are under the powerful and comfortable influence of this doctrine, you will, in the first place,

bless God for Jesus Christ, by whose obedience you are made righteous: You will value his justifying righteousness, and make mention of it at all proper times; you will glory alone in Christ, and will give the whole glory of your justification to him; and will be earnestly and studiously desirous of having your conversations as become the gospel of Christ, and this truth of it in particular.

14 The Doctrine Of Imputed Righteousness Without Work Asserted And Proved

The Works of the LORD are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.—PSALM

111:2

Even as David also describeth the Blessedness of the Man unto whom God imputeth Righteousness without Works.—ROMANS 4:6

This Epistle is written on purpose to state, explain, and vindicate, the doctrine of a sinner's justification before God, by the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ. In order to which, the Apostle takes up his two first chapters, and part of the third, in proving, that both Jews and Gentiles are under sin, that they have by sinning broke the law of God, and so are become liable to its curses and condemnation, and therefore cannot be justified in the sight of God, by their obedience to it; and then strongly and justly concludes, that a man is justified by faith, in the imputed righteousness of Christ, without the deeds of the law. This doctrine he confirms in the beginning of this chapter, by instances of two of the greatest men, for religion and godliness, that ever were in the Jewish nation. The one is Abraham, who was the friend of God, and the father of the faithful, and yet he was not justified before God by his works; for what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness, in verse 3. The other is David, a man after God's own heart, raised up by the Lord to fulfill all his will. Who yet was so far from trusting to, or depending upon his own righteousness, for justification, that he wholly places the happiness of men, and so unquestionably his own, in a righteousness imputed to him by God, without works, as in the words I have read unto you. In speaking to which, I shall,

I. Inquire what that righteousness is, which God imputes to his people for justification.

II. What is meant by an imputation of it.

III. The manner in which it is imputed to them without works.

IV. The blessedness of those persons, who have it thus imputed to them.

I. I Shall inquire what this righteousness is which God imputes to his people for justification; and also endeavor to shew, what it is not, and then what it is.

First; What it is not. And 1. It is not man's obedience to a law of works, because this at best is imperfect, and therefore cannot justify. Those persons who have most eagerly pursued after righteousness by the works of the law, and have made the greatest advances towards it this way, yet have fell abundantly short of it, as the people of Israel in general, and in particular the Pharisees, whose righteousness made the greatest pretences to a justifying one, of any people at the time in which they lived, and yet our Lord says of it (Matthew 5:20). Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. If it should be said there men were a parcel of hypocrites, and therefore their righteousness is not to be mentioned, with the righteousness of real and sincere Christians, it is easily replied, in the words of the wise man (Eccl. 7:11). There is not a just man in the earth, who doeth good and sinneth not. The most holy men that ever lived on the earth, have been always ready to acknowledge the imperfections of their obedience and righteousness. Job, was very early convinced of this, and very ingenuous in his confession of it, when he says (Job 9:30, 31), If I wash myself with snow water and make my hands never so clean, yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own cloaths shall abhor me. Or, as the words may be rendered, shall cause me to be abhorred; or will discover me to be abominable; that is, my garments of righteousness which I have took so much pains with to work out, make and keep clean, will be so far from rendering me grateful, in the sight of my Judge, that they will rather discover the abominable filthiness of my nature, and so make me the object of his abhorrence. It is upon this account, and with the same view, that David desired (Ps. 143:2). That God would not enter into judgement with him, because that in his sight, no flesh living could be justified; that is, by their own righteousness. And so the Church

132 THE DOCTRINE OF IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS WITHOUT WORK ASSERTED AND PROVED in Isaiah's time (Chap. 64:6) acknowledges, that all her Righteousness were as filthy rags, and therefore could not be justifying. Besides this can never be the righteousness intended in my text. Because this is a righteousness of works. Whereas the righteousness God is here said to impute, is a righteousness without works. Moreover man's obedience to the law of works is his own righteousness. Whereas the righteousness here mentioned must be another's, because it is an imputed one. A man's own righteousness, inherent in him, needs no imputation of it to him. Add to this, that the blessedness of a man, does not consist in, or result from, his own righteousness; for salvation, which is the whole of a man's happiness, as to spiritual things, is not by works of righteousness done by men, but springs from, and is brought about, by the grace, mercy, and love of God through Christ; for if man's happiness consisted in, or was procured by his own righteousness, the grace, mercy, and love of God in man's salvation, would be greatly obscured and lessened, his wisdom, in the tuition of his Son, would be liable to be impeached and arraigned, his mission would appear needless, as well as his death, as the Apostle (Gal. 2:21), argues, if righteousness comes by the law, then Christ is dead in vain. Which argument deserves special notice.

2. This righteousness is not man's obedience to the gospel as a new and milder law. The scheme of some persons, if I apprehend it right, is this, that Christ came into this world, to relax the old law of works, and to mitigate and abate the severities of it, and to introduce a new law, a gospel law, a law of milder terms, a remedial law, the terms and conditions of which, are faith, repentance, and sincere obedience, which though imperfect, is through Christ and for his sake accepted of, in the room of a perfect righteousness. The whole of which scheme is entirely false. For, in the first place, Christ came not into the world, either to destroy, or relax the law of God, but to fulfill it, which he did completely, by his active and passive obedience to it. He fulfilled every jot and tittle of the perceptive part of the law, which required a holy nature and perfect obedience, both which were found in him. He bore the whole penalty of the law, in the room and stead of his people, all its exactions, requirements and demands were answered by him; all its severities were executed on him; he was not spared or abated

any thing, and hereby he magnified the law, and made it honourable. He indeed freed his people from the curse and condemnation of it; but has not either abolished or relaxed it, but keeps it in his own hands as a rule of life and conversation to them, and has left it in its full mandatory, cursing and damning power over others without the least mitigation, relaxation, or infringement of it. Moreover the gospel is no new law, it: is no law at all, there is nothing in it that looks like a law, it is called (Acts 20:24), The gospel of the grace of God; because it is a discovery of the exceeding riches of God's grace in his kindness to lost man, through Jesus Christ It is called the gospel of our salvation, because it reveals the Saviour, it gives an account of his person, office, and grace, and of the great salvation he has wrought out; and points out the persons who shall share in it, and be everlasting possessors of it, as the word *εὐγγέλιον* itself translated, gospel, signifies good news, or glad tidings. Now what is there either in the name, or thing, that looks like a law. The gospel is no other than a pure promise, a free declaration of peace and pardon, righteousness, life, and salvation to poor sinners by Jesus Christ. The sum and substance of it is, that this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners (1 Tim. 1:15).

Again; faith and repentance are not the conditions of the new covenant, or terms of any new law, as duties incumbent on us, they belong to the moral law, or law of works, which obliges us to obedience to every thing God does or shall reveal as his will. As graces bestowed upon us by God, they are parts, they are blessings of the new covenant of grace, and not conditions of it. Besides, if they were terms or conditions of this new law, or gospel law talked of, which indeed is a contradiction in terms, they would not be more easy than the terms of the law of works were to Adam in innocence. Nay it was much more easy for Adam to have kept the whole law of works, than it is for any of his fallen posterity to repent and believe of themselves. And how does this appear to be a remedial law, or a law of milder terms, as it is called.

Once more, it is not consistent either with the truth or justice of God, to accept, of an imperfect righteousness, though ever so sincere, in the room of a perfect one. It is not consistent with his truth. He whose judgement is according to truth, can

never account that a perfect righteousness, which is imperfect. It is not consistent with his justice, he who is the judge of all the earth will do right, and therefore he will by no means clear the guilty, without a full satisfaction to, and a reparation of his broken law. This is the true reason why he set forth Christ to be the propitiation for sin. Namely, that he might appear to be just whilst he was the justifier of him that believes in Jesus. Whereas, was he to justify persons upon the foot of an imperfect Righteousness, he would neither appear just to himself, or to his law, which requires a perfect and complete obedience.

3. This righteousness is not a man's profession of religion, or his submission to the ordinances of the gospel, for men may draw near to God with their mouths, and honour him with their lips, and yet their hearts be removed far from him, and their fear of him be only taught by the precepts of men; they may seek the Lord daily, and seemingly delight to know his ways, as a nation that did righteousness and forsook not the ordinances of their God; they may ask of him the ordinances of justice, and in an outward shew take delight in approaching to him; they may appear to be outwardly righteous before men, and yet be inwardly full of all manner of impurity. May have a name to live and yet be dead; they may have the form of godliness, and yet deny the power thereof; they may submit to the ordinance of baptism, and constantly attend the Lord's supper, and yet be destitute of a justifying righteousness. Yea, even a real and genuine profession of religion, and an hearty submission to gospel ordinances, from right principles to right ends, is not a man's righteousness before God.

4. Neither is sincerity in any religion, no not in the best religion, this righteousness; for it is possible that a man may be sincerely wrong, as well as sincerely right. There may be a sincere Pagan, or a sincere Papist, or a sincere Mahometan, as well as a sincere Christian. Nay it's possible for a man to be a sincere persecutor of the true religion, as well as a sincere professor of it. The apostle Paul, was sincere in persecuting the gospel, as well as he afterwards was, in preaching that faith he once destroyed. For he thought with himself (Acts 26:9), that he ought, in conscience, for the glory of God, and the advancement of religion, to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. And our Lord tells his disciples (John 16:2), that the time

was coming, that whosoever killed them would think that he did God service. So that sincerity is not a man's righteousness before God. And indeed take sincerity as a distinct grace of the Spirit of God, and it belongs to sanctification, and not to justification, though it seems rather to be what runs through every other grace, than to be distinct from them; and is what makes our faith unfeigned, our love without dissimulation, and our hope without hypocrisy.

5. Nor is the whole real work of grace and sanctification upon the soul its justifying righteousness, for this would be to confound justification and sanctification together; which two blessings of grace, though they meet in one and the same subject, and come out of one and the same hand, yet are they in themselves distinct. Sanctification is a work of grace within us, justification is an act of grace upon us. Sanctification is a gradual and progressive work; it is signified (2 Pet. 3:18), by a growing in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ; and it is a work that is but begun, yet is not yet finished, and is carried on by degrees. Justification is done simul et semel, it is a complete act at once; it is expressed (Col. 2:10), by the saints being complete in Christ, and perfected by his one sacrifice.

6. If the whole work of sanctification, is not our justifying righteousness before God, then certainly the to credere, or act of believing, which is only a part of this work, cannot be it. There are indeed some scriptures in this chapter wherein is my text, which are by some thought to favor this notion, as when it is said in verse 3. Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness; and in verse 5, his faith is counted for righteousness; and in verse 9, for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness; in all which places, not the act of faith, but the object of faith is intended, as will appear from this single consideration, namely, that this it, or faith, which was imputed to Abraham, is said to be imputed to others also, as is evident from verses 22, 23, 24, and therefore it was imputed unto him for righteousness. Now if it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him, but for us also, to whom it, the very self same it, shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. Now, whatever reason persons may think they have to conclude, that Abraham's act of faith was imputed to himself, as

his justifying righteousness; yet it cannot with any reason be concluded, that his act of faith should be imputed to others also as such. The plain meaning is, that object, which Abraham's faith respected and was reckoned to him for his righteousness, is also imputed for righteousness to all others who believe in Christ. Besides, it ought to be observed, that the apostle does not use the preposition *anti* but *επ*; he does not say that faith was imputed *anti δικαιοσυνην* instead of righteousness, but *επ ζκιαοσυνην*, unto righteousness, and the meaning of the phrase is the same, with the meaning of the words in Romans 10:10. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and is expressive of the great doctrine of justification by faith in the imputed righteousness of Christ. That the *to credere*, or act of believing, is not the righteousness intended in my text, may appear yet more manifest, from the following considerations.

1st. Faith as a duty performed, or as a grace exercised by the believer, is his own; hence we read in scripture of my faith, and thy faith, and his faith; the just man is said to live by his faith (Heb. 17:5). And says our Lord to the woman of Canaan, O woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt (Matthew 5:28). And says the apostle (Jam. 2:28), shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. But now the righteousness by which a man is justified before God, is not his own, but another's, and therefore imputed to him. Hence the apostle Paul desired to be found in Christ, not having on, says he, mine own righteousness, which is of the law (Phil. 3:9). Whereas if faith had been his righteousness, he should have desired to have on his own righteousness, and not another's.

2d. Faith as such is a work of the law, as it is the gift of God, and a grace bestowed upon us; it is a part of the covenant of grace, as has been already observed, but as it is a duty required of us, and performed by us, it belongs to the laws and is done in obedience to it. It is called the commandment of God. This is his commandment, that ye believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ (1 John 3:23). It is called the work of God (John 6:28, 29), not only because it is wrought in us by God, but also because it is required of us by him; every command and all duty belongs to the law, as every promise and all grace does to the gospel. Now if faith, as an act of ours, is our justifying righteousness,

then we are justified by a work of the law, whereas the scripture says (Rom. 3:20): By the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in his sight.

3d. Faith is imperfect in the best of saints; our Lord frequently called his own disciples, men of little faith; and so conscious were they themselves of the imperfection of it, that they prayed to him, saying (Luke 17:5), Lord increase our faith. There are *ταυσερηματατηπισεωπ*, some deficiencies, something lacking, in the faith of the best of God's people. Every one has reason to say, more or less, as the poor man in the gospel did (Mark 9:24), Lord I believe, help thou mine unbelief. And for this reason faith cannot be our justifying righteousness, for that ought to be perfect. Besides, was it perfect, it is but a part of the law. It is indeed one of the weightier matters of the law, as in (Matthew 23:23), but then it is not the whole of the law. Now the scripture says (Gal. 3:10), Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things, which are written in the book of the law, to do them. And God whose judgement is according to truth, cannot reckon that a perfect conformity to the law, which is only a partial one.

4th. Faith is manifestly distinguished from righteousness (Rom. 10:10), when a man is said to believe unto righteousness, when the righteousness of God is said to be revealed from faith to faith, and when it is said to be through the faith of Christ, and is called the righteousness of God by faith. Now then, if faith and righteousness are two different things, then faith is not our justifying righteousness, and so not the righteousness mentioned in my text.

5th. Something else is represented, as the righteousness by which a sinner is justified before God. The people of God, are said to be justified freely by the grace of God, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and some times by the blood of Christ, and at other times by the one man's obedience (Rom. 2:24; 6:9-19). Now, faith is not the redemption in Christ Jesus, nor is it the blood of Christ, nor is it his obedience either active or passive, and therefore is not that which is imputed for justification. Nevertheless, faith must be allowed to have a very great concern in the business of justification. Hence we are said to be justified by faith (Rom. 5:1), not by faith either as a work performed by us, or as a grace wrought in us, but we are justified by it relatively or objectively, as it

respects, apprehends, and lays hold on Christ and his righteousness for justification; or we are justified by it organically, as it is a recipient of this blessing, for faith is the hand which receives the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of our salvation. Faith is that grace to which this righteousness is revealed, and by which the soul first spies it. When beholding its glory, sufficiency and suitableness, it approves of it, and renounces its own righteousness. It is that grace by which a soul puts on Christ's righteousness as its garment, and rejoices therein, by which all boasting in a man's own works is excluded, and by which all the glory of justification is given to Christ. But I proceed,

Secondly, To shew, what is this righteousness intended in my text, which God imputes unto his people, and that is, the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. By which I mean not his essential righteousness as God, as Osiander dreamed. For though he who is our Righteousness is Jehovah (Jer. 23:6), yet that righteousness of his by which he is Jehovah, is not our justifying righteousness but that which results from his active and passive obedience as Mediator (Rom. 5:1). For by one man's obedience many are made righteous, or is, that righteousness of Christ, which consists of the holiness of his nature, the conformity of his life and actions to the law of God, and his sustaining the whole penalty of that law, in the room and stead of his people. In the commendation of which righteousness, many things might be said; let these few following suffice at present.

1. It is a law honouring, and a justice satisfying righteousness, and therefore God is well pleased with it (Rom. 5:9); is well pleased for his righteousness sake, because he hath magnified the law and made it honourable. The law is made more honourable by Christ's obedience to it, than it is by the obedience of all the angels in heaven, or than it could be by all God's people on earth, supposing their obedience was never so perfect. The reason is because of the greatness of his person, he being God as well as man, who obeyed and wrought out a righteousness, which is also such an one, as justice can find no fault with, but is entirely satisfied with, and in which God's people appear even in the eye of justice, unblameable, and irreproveable.

2. It is perfect and complete, and acquits from all sin and condemnation, those who are interested in it, are perfectly comely through the comeliness which is

put upon them; they are complete in Christ, the head of all principality and power; they are justified by this righteousness, from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses; they are freed from all guilt of sin, are not under obligation to punishment, and shall not enter into condemnation; their sins are now covered and hid from the eye of divine justice, and when they are sought for hereafter shall not be found.

3. It is the righteousness of God, and so serves for many; if it had been only by the righteousness of a creature, it could have been of no use and service, but to the creature who was the author of it; but it being the righteousness of God, it is to all and upon all that believe; many are made righteous by it, even all the elect of God and seed of Christ. For in him shall all the seed of Israel be justified and shall glory. It is a garment down to the foot, and covers every member, even the meanest and lowest in Christ's mystical body.

4. It is an everlasting righteousness. Our righteousness is both imperfect and of a short continuance. Like Ephraim's goodness, it is as the morning cloud and the early dew. But Christ's righteousness will abide for ever, it is a garment that will never wear out, or wax old, it is a righteousness that will last our lives, be of service at death, appear fresh at judgement, and will answer for us in a time to come, and give us an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

5. It is a better righteousness than Adam had in innocence, or the angels now have in heaven. Adam's righteousness was the righteousness of a creature, but this the righteousness of God. That was looseable and was actually lost (Eccl. 7:9), for God made man upright, but he sought out many inventions, in seeking which he lost his righteousness; but Christ's righteousness can never be lost, it abides for ever. The same may be said of the righteousness of Angels, which at best is but a creature righteousness, and might be lost, as it was by a large number of them, and might have been by the rest, had it not been for confirming grace from Christ. Christ's righteousness may well be called (Luke 15:22), the best robe, for it is such an one as Adam never had to his back in innocence, or the angels now have in glory. But I go on,

II. To inquire what is meant by the imputation of this righteousness; which is the way in which it

136 THE DOCTRINE OF IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS WITHOUT WORK ASSERTED AND PROVED becomes ours and indeed is the only way in which it can become ours. The Hebrew word in Genesis 15:6 and the Greek word λογίζωμαι used by the apostle here, signifies to estimate, reckon, impute, or place something to the account of another. So the righteousness of Christ is estimated, reckoned, and imputed to be his people's, and is placed to their account as such by God the Father, and looked upon as much by him as their justifying righteousness or as though it had been wrought by them, in their own persons. That this righteousness becomes ours this way, is manifest. For in the same way that Adam's sin became ours, the same way the righteousness of Christ becomes ours; or the same way we are made sinners by the disobedience of Adam, are we made righteous by the obedience of Christ (Rom. 5:19). For as by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners. So by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous. Now Adam's sin became ours, or we were made sinners, through his sin; by imputation, it was reckoned, it was placed to the account of all his posterity. So Christ's righteousness becomes ours, or we are made righteous, through that righteousness of his; by the imputation of it to us, it is reckoned, it is placed to our account. Again, the same way our sins became Christ's, Christ's righteousness becomes ours, as appears from 1 Corinthians 5:21. He who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Now the way in which Christ was made sin for us, was by imputation; he never had any sin inherent in him, though he had it transferred unto him and laid upon him. So the way in which we are made the righteousness of God, must be by the imputation of Christ's righteousness, and indeed we cannot be made righteous any other way, than by imputation. For the objects of justification are ungodly persons in themselves; for God justifies the ungodly, as in the verse preceding my text. Now if they are ungodly in themselves, then they are not justified by a righteousness of their own, it must be by the righteousness of another. And if they are justified by the righteousness of another, that other's righteousness must be some way or other made theirs, it must be placed to their account, and reckoned as their own, which is only done by an imputation of it to them. But,

III. I shall now consider the manner in which this

righteousness is thus imputed, and that is, without works. That this righteousness is imputed without works, is manifest from the character the persons bear, whom God justifies, which is that of ungodly ones, as has been just now observed. If they are ungodly, they are without works; good works, or works of righteousness. If God therefore will justify such, as he certainly does, he must justify them by imputing a righteousness to them, without any consideration of works done by them. And, indeed, if God did not impute righteousness for justification in this manner, justification would not be an act of free grace, as it is always represented to be. We may argue about justification, as the Apostle does about election, when he says (Rom. 11:6), and if of grace, then it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace, otherwise work is no more work. We are said (Titus 3:7), to be justified, not only by the grace of God, but freely by his grace, to express the abundance and freeness of divine grace, in the free gift of righteousness unto justification of life. Besides, if righteousness was not imputed without works, boasting would not be excluded, as it is in God's way of justifying sinners, by Christ's righteousness, without any consideration of them. And, indeed, works are not causes of any sort in the affair of justification, they are not the moving cause of it. For that is the free grace of God; nor are they the material cause of it, for that is the obedience and righteousness of Christ. Nor are they the instrumental cause, for that is faith, nor are they the *causa sine qua non*, or causes without which persons are justified, who never performed good works. And indeed those that are justified, are justified, if not without the presence of them, yet without the efficiency of them, or any consideration of them as having any casual influence on justification; for with reference hereunto, they are not to be admitted into the lowest class or range of causes. It may perhaps be said, how then can the Apostles, Paul and James, be reconciled in this matter, seeing the one positively affirms (Rom. 3:28), that a man is justified by faith, without the works of the law; and the other (Jam. 2:21, 24, 25), as positively asserts that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only. To which I answer, there are two things, which when observed, will rectify and quickly remove the seeming difficulty, and reconcile the Apostles to each other,

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which are,

1. They speak of two different things. The Apostle Paul speaks of the justification of a man's person before God, and this he truly asserts to be, by a righteousness imputed without works. The Apostle James speaks of a justification of a man's faith, or of his cause before men, which he also truly asserts to be by works, for wisdom is justified of her children (Matthew 11:19). True and undefiled religion is discovered and bore witness to by good works. Faith is shewn forth, made known, and evidentially perfected by them; in justification by imputed righteousness, a man has not whereof to boast before God. In justification of a man's cause by works, a man has whereof to boast before men, and in some cases with a becoming modesty may say with Samuel (1 Sam. 12:3): Whose ox have I taken? whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded?

2. They speak to two different sort of persons. The apostle Paul had to do with self Justiciaries, who fought for righteousness not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law, who being ignorant of God's righteousness, went about to establish their own righteousness, and so submitted not to the righteousness of Christ. The apostle James had to do with a set of men called Gnostics, who boasted of their knowledge, from whence they took their name. These were the Libertines and Antinomians of that day, who trusting to their speculative notions and historical faith, despised the law, and disregarded and neglected the performance of good works, accounting their knowledge sufficient unto salvation. And this also occasioned those different modes of expression in these Apostles, who otherwise were agreed in the same truths. I go on,

IV. To consider the blessedness of those persons who have this righteousness imputed to them.

1. They are freed from all sin and condemnation, not from the being of sin, but from the guilt of it, and all obligation to punishment (Rom. 8:1). For there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, to them who are made the righteousness of God, in him, they may say as the apostle did (Rom. 8:33, 34), Who shall say any thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifies, who shall condemn; it is Christ that died. And therefore they must be happy persons, for blessed is the man whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sin is covered; blessed is the man to whom

the Lord will not impute sin, with which words David (Ps. 32:1), describeth the blessedness of the persons interested in this righteousness —

2. Their persons and services are both acceptable to God, he is well pleased with both, for Christ's righteousness sake. Christ's garments smell of myrrh, aloes and cassia, with which his people being clad, the Lord smells a sweet smell in them, as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed; their persons come up with acceptance before him, and their sacrifices both of prayer and praise are grateful to him, through the person, blood, righteousness and mediation of Christ's righteousness which is imputed to them, shall never be taken away from them, is one of those blessings he will never reverse, and one of those gifts of his which are without repentance. —

3. It shall go well with these persons in life, at death, and at judgment (Isa. 3:10), Say ye to the Righteous it shall go well with him. It shall go well with him in life, for all things work together for his good. It shall go well with him at death. For the righteous hath hope in his death, founded upon this righteousness imputed to him. It shall go well with him at judgment, for this righteousness will answer for him at that time, and bring him off clear at God's bars and introduce him into his kingdom and glory.—

4. Such persons are heirs of glory, and shall everlastingly enjoy it, for being justified by grace, they are made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. Justification and glorification are closely connected together. For whom God justified, them he also glorified (Rom. 8:30). Justified persons may comfortably argue, from their justification, to their glorification, and strongly conclude with the apostle (Rom. 5:9). That if they are justified by the blood of Christ, they shall be saved from wrath through him. I shall add no more, but some short improvement of what has been said, and

1. Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, for without a righteousness there will be no admittance into heaven, and such an one it must be, as is commensurate to all the demands of God's righteous law, for no other will be satisfactory to divine justice. —

2. Go to Christ for such an one, in whom only it is to be had, who is the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believes (Rom.10:4), it may be had

in him, it cannot be had in any other. For surely, or only, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength (Isa. 45:24).

3. Admire the grace of God, in imputing this righteousness to you, and rejoice therein; it is grace in Christ: to procure, and grace in the Father to impute it, and grace in the Spirit to apply it. Admire the grace of each person herein, and ascribe the glory of your justification to it.

4. Miserable will those persons be, who will be found at the last day without this righteousness, for such shall not inherit the kingdom of God, they will not be admitted into the wedding chamber, not having on the wedding garment, but orders will be given to bind them hand and feet, and cast them into outer darkness, where will be weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth.

15 The Necessity Of Christ's Making Satisfaction For Sin, Proved And Confirmed.

A Sermon,

Preached June 19, 1766, to an Assembly of Ministers and Churches, at the Rev. Mr. Burford's Meetinghouse, in. Goodman's-Fields.

HEBREWS 2:10.

For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

IN the preceding verse we have an account of the low estate and condition our Lord was brought, into in human nature; he was made a little lower than the angels so he was with respect to his incarnation in general; for whatever may be said for the likeness or equality of an human soul without sin, to an angelic spirit, both being spiritual substances, rational and intelligent, immaterial and immortal it is certain, that the corporal part of human nature is inferior to the nature of angels; but what the apostle has respect unto in particular, is Christ's suffering death in human nature; in, and during which, he was made a little, or as it may be rendered, and as it is in the margin of some Bibles, a little while lower than the angels; that is, whilst he was suffering death, and lay under the power and dominion of it; Seeing angels die not but he tasted death for every man, or rather for every one; that is, for every one of the sons, that he was to bring to glory;

for every one of the brethren he was not ashamed to own as such for every member of the church, in the midst of which he sung praise; and for every one of the children God gave unto him, and for whose sake he partook of flesh and blood, as the context shews. Now, in the words read, a reason is given why Christ was made thus low; and the necessity of his suffering and tasting death for his people is observed, for it became him, &c. It was fitting and necessary that if God would save sinners, and bring them to glory, that the Saviour of them should suffer in their room and stead all that the law and justice of God could require. Hence we read, that Christ must suffer many things, and he killed: and ought not Christ to have suffered these things? Matt. 16:21; Luke 24:26; There was a necessity for it, by the decree of God, by which it was determined; by the covenant-engagements between the Father and the Son, in which it was agreed to and settled; and by the prophecies of the Old Testament, which spoke of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow, and therefore must he endured; or otherwise, how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be? Matt. 26:54, and the salvation of sinners made his sufferings necessary, as without which it could not be obtained.

In the words there is a periphrasis of the divine Being, by which he is described; and such a like descriptive circumlocution of him is in Romans 11:36. For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things. Here he is described as the final cause or last end of all things, for whom are all things; for he has made all things for himself, for his own glory, for the glorifying of all his perfections; and as the efficient cause of all things; by whom are all things, that is, by whom all things are made; all things in nature, for he has made the heavens, the earth, and the sea, and all that in them are; and all things in providence are done and overruled by him; my father worketh hitherto, says Christ, that is, all things in providence, and I work conjunctly with him, John 5:17, and all things in grace, for they all take their rise from him, and are begun by him, being planned by him; All things are of God, who hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. 5:18. An intimation is likewise given of a gracious design of his to save and bring some persons

to glory, who are said to be sons, and these many. Sons by divine predestination, whom God predestinated to the adoption of children by Christ; for whom this blessing is provided and secured in covenant, which runs thus, I will be their father, and they shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Whom Christ has redeemed from under the law, that they might receive the adoption of children; and to whom, believing in Christ, he gives the power and privilege to become the sons of God; and so they are openly and manifestatively the children of God, by faith in Christ; and to these it is their heavenly Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom: and since they are many, even the many that are chosen of God; the many that Christ gave his life a ransom for; the many, for the remission of whose sins his blood was shed; the many that are made righteous by his obedience; hence many mansions of glory are prepared for them in Christ's Father's house: and there is a way in which they are brought thither. God has chosen them through sanctification of the spirit, and the belief of the truth, to the obtaining of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ has died for them, and by means of his death, they receive the promise of the eternal inheritance, and the inheritance itself. God calls them by his grace to eternal glory, and makes them meet to be partakers of the inheritance with the saints in light: the person by whom they are brought thither is Christ, here called the captain of their salvation: that is, the author of it, as he is said to be in a following chapter, chap. 5:9, whom God appointed to be the Saviour of men, and who has with his own arm wrought out salvation for them; in whom it is, and in no other: and the way and means by which he has procured it, is by his perfect sufferings and death; for though he was a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, that is, in suffering, he became the author of eternal salvation, as in the place before referred to; and it was necessary, that he, the surety and Saviour, should suffer, the just for the unjust, in their room and stead, to bring them unto God, into his presence here, and unto eternal glory hereafter. This was necessary for the glorifying of his divine perfections; not only those of grace and mercy, but of justice and holiness. The plain sense of the words is this; that since it was the design and pleasure of the

all-wise and all-powerful former and maker of all things, to bring some of the sons of men, and who are made the sons of God, to eternal glory and happiness, by Christ the captain and author of their salvation; it was becoming and fitting, and so necessary, that he should completely and perfectly suffer in their room and stead, all that the law and justice of God could require to make satisfaction for their sins; and so be brought to glory in a way consistent with the divine perfections.

I shall not insist on the various doctrines contained in these words: I shall take no farther notice of those which relate to the being, nature, perfections, ways, and works of God; nor to the adoption of his people, nor to the glory they are brought unto; nor to their salvation, and to Christ, the author of it; nor to the sufferings of Christ, and the completeness of them; only to the satisfaction of Christ by them, and the necessity of that.

The word satisfaction is not syllabically expressed in scripture, as used of that which is made by Christ; but the thing itself is frequently spoken of. What Christ has done and suffered, in the room and stead of sinners, with content, well-pleasedness, and acceptance to God, is what we call satisfaction; and this is plentifully declared in the word of God; as when God is said to be well-pleased for Christ's righteousness sake, and with it; because it answers all the demands of law and justice; and by it the law is magnified and made honourable: and when the sacrifice of Christ, and such his sufferings be, is said to be of a sweet smelling savour to God, because it has expiated and made atonement for sin; that is, made satisfaction for it, and taken it away, which the sacrifices under the law could not do; hence there was a remembrance of sin every year; but by the sacrifice of Christ it is put away for ever, Isai. 42:21; Eph. 5:2; Heb. 9:26. and chap. 10:3, 4, 14; and there are also terms and phrases used of Christ and his work, which are equivalent and synonymous to satisfaction for sin, and expressive of it; such as propitiation, reconciliation, atonement, &c.

The doctrine of Christ's satisfaction for sin, is the glory of the Christian religion; what distinguishes it from all other religions, and gives it the preference to them; and without which, that itself would be of little worth. It is a doctrine of the utmost importance, for

without satisfaction for sin, there can be no salvation from it. The Socinians take a great deal of pains to damn themselves, and every body else, as much as in them lies, by denying and attempting to destroy this doctrine, which only secures salvation if there are such things as damnable heresies, as the scripture assures us there be, the denial of Christ's satisfaction is certainly one; since without this, sin cannot be pardoned, nor a sinner saved, nor a son brought to glory. Those that set themselves to oppose it, are in dangerous circumstances; and if they do it wilfully, obstinately, and knowingly, which is what the apostle means, when he says, if we sin wilfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, of this truth, the atoning sacrifice of Christ, by denying that such are inevitably lost and undone; there is no help nor hope for them in heaven or in earth, from angels or men, or from any quarter whatever; for there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins; there never will be another atoning sacrifice offered up, another Saviour provided, another Jesus sent to save men from their sins, by making satisfaction for them; there will be nothing else but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries of this truth, or who are contrary, and oppose themselves to it; for if he who despised Moses's law, neglected and broke the moral law, and the precepts of it, died without mercy, under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the son of God? denied and rejected the eternal sonship of Christ, as the Socinians do, and hath counted the blood of the covenant an unholy or common thing; no other than the blood of a mere creature, as the same persons affirm, and of no more efficacy to take away sin than that? see Heb. 10:26-28; how much does it concern us then to receive and embrace this truth, and earnestly contend for it, which is of so much importance in the great affair of our salvation.

I propose not to treat of the doctrine of satisfaction, at large, in all the parts of it, which cannot be comprised in a single discourse, I shall not consider the ground and foundation of it, and on which it proceeds, which are the council and covenant of peace, and the suretyship engagements of Christ therein; nor the causes of it, the efficient and procuring, the impulsive

and moving causes of it; nor the matter of it, the fulfilling of the whole law, as to precept and penalty; or Christ's doing and

suffering all that the law and justice of God could require; nor the form and manner in which it was made, through Christ's bearing the sins of his people imputed to him; for this doctrine includes the imputation of their sins to Christ; and through his dying for their sins, thereby making atonement for them; and through his dying for sinners, in their room and stead, as their surety and substitute; nor the ends which were to be answered, and are answered by it: I shall only very briefly treat of the necessity of it; shewing that without it sin cannot be pardoned, nor a sinner saved, nor a son brought to glory. And there are two things I desire may be granted, and which I think may be easily granted, and then satisfaction for sin will appear necessary; and they are, the one, that men are sinners; and the other, that it is the will of God to save sinners, at least some sinners; but if neither of these are facts, a satisfaction is unnecessary, and it is in vain to talk about it.

First, Let it be granted that men are sinners; and, one would think, this would be allowed at once, unless any can work themselves up into such a fancy, that they are an innocent sort of beings, whose natures are not depraved, nor their actions wrong, neither offensive to God, nor injurious to their fellow-creatures; and one would imagine the opposers of Christ's satisfaction have entertained such a conceit of themselves, or they would never set themselves against a doctrine so suitable and salutary to them; but if this is the case with them, scripture, experience, conscience when awakened, and daily facts are against them. The scriptures declare that all men have sinned in Adam, are made, constituted, and accounted sinners by his disobedience; yea, that they are actual sinners, have all sinned, and come short of the glory of God; that they are all under sin, involved in the guilt and pollution of sin, under the power and dominion of, it, and liable to punishment. for it; and that this is the case of all, not one excepted. Now as men are sinners, they are transgressors of the law of God; for sin is a transgression of the law; and every, transgression, of that, and disobedience to it, has received, does receive, or will receive a just recompence of reward; that is,

righteous punishment: there never was a sin, nor will he one, but what is punished either in the sinner, or in the surety for him, 1 John 3:4; Heb. 2:2, the law being broken, it accuses of sin, pronounces guilty for it, proceeds to curse and condemn, passes the sentence of condemnation and death; which, without a satisfaction, must be executed; the sanction of the law is death the law is never abrogated, nor the sanction of it changed, altered, nor abated; God never relaxes that; though he puts a favourable construction on his law, by admitting a surety in the room of the delinquent, yet punishment is always inflicted.

Men by sin are alienated from the life of God, are estranged from him, are set at a distance from him, and are in a state of separation from him, as to communion; and without reconciliation and satisfaction made for sin, can never be admitted to it. An irreconcilable sinner can never enjoy nearness to God and fellowship with him; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? a righteous God and unrighteous men? and whenever it is had, it is the fruit of Christ's sufferings and death; he suffered, the just for the unjust, to bring them unto God, who were at a distance from him with respect to communion, though not with respect to union; to bring them into his gracious presence, into an open state of favour with him; it is through his blood, making peace for them, that they who were afar off from God, and fellowship with him, are made nigh, and favoured with it, 1 Peter 3:18; Ephes. 3:13, 14. I do not say that the satisfaction of Christ procures the love of God, it is the fruit and effect of it; but this I say, it opens the way into the embraces of his arms, stopped up by sin, which must be removed, in order to enjoy them.

And here let me observe to you something relating to experience, which you would do well to lay up in your minds; it may be of use to you hereafter, when you may be tempted to doubt of your interest in Christ's satisfaction. Have you any reason to believe that you have, at any the, had communion with God, in private or in public, in your closet, or in the family, or in the house of God, under any ordinance, either the ministry of the word, or prayer, or the supper of the Lord? Then you may be assured Christ has made satisfaction for you; or you would never have enjoyed such communion.

Again; Men by sin are become enemies unto God, and. therefore a reconciliation, or satisfaction for sin is become necessary they are enemies in their minds, by wicked works; there is an inward enmity in their hearts, which is outwardly discovered by their evil actions; yea, their carnal mind is enmity itself against God; and besides this, there is, on the part of God, a law-enmity, an enmity declared in the law: in the eye of the law, and in the sight of justice having sinned, they are viewed as enemies to God, and rebels against him, and so are declared in and by the law, and considered as such not that there is any real enmity in the heart of God to elect sinners; this is inconsistent with his everlasting and unchangeable love to them; but there is a law-enmity which must be slain and removed, and was slain and removed in and by the death of Christ as when subjects rise up in rebellion against their king, there may be no enmity in his heart to them, yet by the law of the land, they are declared and looked upon as enemies, rebels, and traitors to his crown and government; and are treated as such, and proceeded against in due form of law, though at length pardoned, at least, some of them; and it is this sort of enmity which makes the satisfaction of Christ for sin necessary. Had there been only an inward enmity in men's minds to God, manifested by their works, that might have been removed, and is removed, by the Spirit of God causing the arrows of the word to be sharp in the hearts of such enemies of the king; whereby the people fall under him, lay down the weapons of their rebellion, and submit unto him; and are reconciled to the righteousness of Christ, to the way of salvation by him, and to his laws and government; and by the grace of God, the enmity of their hearts is overcome, and love is implanted in their souls. To remove this enmity, the sufferings and death of Christ seem not necessary; and though it is said, while God's elect were sinners, Christ died for them; and, when they were enemies, they were reconciled to God by his death; yet this is not to be understood of the inward depravity and enmity of their hearts; for the far greater part of those for whom Christ died, and whom he reconciled, were not then in a state of actual corruption and enmity, for they were not in actual being; but the sense is, that they were then considered as sinners in Adam; and as enemies, rebels, and traitors in the apostate head; when

Christ died for them, and reconciled them to God, by making satisfaction for their sins, which this enmity made necessary: there is a twofold reconciliation, with respect to this twofold enmity; the one is the work of Christ, the other the work of the Spirit of Christ; the one was made at Christ's death, and by it; the other, at conversion; and we have them both in one text, Rom. 5:10. If when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, then the law- enmity was slain, and reconciliation and satisfaction made for sin; much more, being reconciled, that is, by the grace and Spirit of God at conversion, when the inward enmity is removed, and the heart is filled with love to God, and is made willing to serve him; we shall be saved by his life. A text worthy to be written in letters of gold; no such passage is to be found any where but in the word of God; not in all the voluminous writings of the heathens; it contains a thought, a sentiment, which could never have entered into the heart of man to conceive of, had it not been revealed by God himself in the sacred scripture; ENEMIES RECONCILED TO GOD BY THE DEATH OF HIS SON! Thus then it appears, if men are sinners, and so transgressors of the law, and aliens from God, and enemies to him, satisfaction must be made for their sins, if ever they are pardoned, saved, and brought to glory.

Secondly, The other thing to be granted, in order to make satisfaction for sin appear necessary, is, that it is the will of God to save sinners, at least some of them; and this surely will be allowed by such who believe a divine revelation. God has decreed to save some; he has resolved upon it within himself, and has said, I will save them by the Lord their God. He has appointed some not unto wrath, which they deserve, but to obtain salvation by Jesus Christ. He has chosen them to it, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth. There are some who are ordained unto eternal life, who are vessels of mercy, afore prepared for glory; and there was a provision made for their salvation in the council and covenant of grace, In the council of peace between the Father and the Son, the scheme of salvation was planned; and in the covenant of peace it was settled, and the Son of God was agreed upon to be the author of it; and accordingly, in the fulness of the, he was sent to be the Saviour of men; he came to seek and to save that which was lost, and he

has saved his people from their sins. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ came into the world to save the chief of sinners; and he has obtained salvation for them; and that by his sufferings and death, by the shedding of his blood, to which it is ascribed; being made perfect in suffering, he is become the author of salvation; he has redeemed men to God by his blood, and reconciled them to him by his death; all which was by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God: what Jews and Gentiles did to Christ; and what he suffered by them, were no other than what the hand and counsel of God determined before should be done; and therefore it was necessary they should be done, and that Christ should suffer and die to make satisfaction for the sins of men.

Some have affirmed, that God could forgive sin, and save sinners without a satisfaction: this is said by the Socinians, and by some others, (I am sorry to say it) who own that a satisfaction is made, and that it was fit and expedient it should be demanded and made, at least, some sort of one, as some have expressed it; but to say it was fit and expedient, is giving up the point; for what was fitting and expedient to be done, in the affair of salvation, was necessary: God could not but do, or will to be done, what was proper and fitting to be done. Such a way of talking tends to undermine the doctrine of satisfaction by Christ; and to encourage, and strengthen the hands of the Socinians, the opposers of it; much the same arguments being used by the one as by the other. Indeed, it is not becoming us to limit the holy one of Israel, or to lay a restraint on his power; we should proceed cautiously and warily in this matter. His power is unlimited, power belongs to God; infinite, unlimited, unbounded power; he can do more than we can think or conceive of; with him nothing is impossible; yet it is no ways derogatory to the glory of his power, nor is it any impeachment of it, nor does it argue any imperfection or weakness in him, to say there are some things he cannot do; for not to be able to do them is his glory, when to do them would be weakness and imperfection; and the scripture warrants us in so saying, which for instance, more than once, says, that God cannot lie; for that is contrary to his veracity and truth; nor can he commit iniquity, that would be contrary to his purity and holiness; nor can he do any act of injustice to his

creatures, that would be contrary to his justice and righteousness; nor can he deny himself, that would he against his nature, and the perfections of it; and for the same reason, he cannot forgive sin without a satisfaction; for that would not accord with his perfections, as will be seen presently. After all, it is a vain and fruitless thing to dispute about the power of God, what he can do, or what he cannot do, in a case where he has declared his will, what he will do, or will have done, as in the case before us: for at the same time that he proclaimed his name, a God forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin; it is added, by no means clearing the guilty; that is, without a satisfaction to his justice, or not letting go the guilty unpunished, *Exod. 34:7*; *Num. 14:18*. Nor is a pardoned sinner left altogether unpunished, as the same phrase is rendered in *Jer. 30:11*, for though he is not punished in himself, he is in his surety. Besides in the everlasting covenant of grace God made with his Son, he declared to him what was his will in this case, and which he agreed unto, and came into the world to do, saying, *Lo, I come to do thy will, O God*; and what was that? to offer up the body prepared for him, together with his soul, an offering for sin, to make atonement and satisfaction for it; and which is farther manifest from our Lord's prayer in the garden; which could there have been another way of pardoning sin, and saving sinners, than through the blood, sufferings, and death of Christ, as a sacrifice and satisfaction for sin, that importunate request would have brought it forth, *O my father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: if the persons thou hast given me, and I have undertook to save, can be saved and their sins pardoned, without my drinking this bitter cup of sufferings and death for them, let me be excused drinking it; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt, thy will be done*; and what that will was that was done, is notorious.

It may be said, that to affirm that God cannot forgive sin without a satisfaction, is to make God weaker than man and to represent him as not able to do what men can do a creditor can forgive a debtor, when he is unable to pay the debts that are owing to him; and an offended person can forgive an offender against him; and, in some cases, should, and is to be commended for the same. But it should be observed, that sins are not pecuniary debts, and to be remitted as they may. They

are indeed called debts, not properly, but allusively; if they were proper debts, they might be paid in their kind, one sin by committing another, which is absurd; but they are called debts, because as debts oblige to payment, so these oblige to punishment; which debt of punishment must be paid, either by the debtor, the sinner, or by a surety for him; sins are criminal debts, and can be remitted no other way. God therefore in this affair, is to be considered not merely as a creditor, but as the rector and governor of the world; as the judge of all the earth, who will do right; as the great lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy, and who will secure his own authority as such do justice to himself, and honour to his law, and shew a proper concern for the good of the community, or universe, of which he is the moral governor. So, though one man may forgive another a private offence committed against himself, and as it is an injury to him, he cannot forgive one, as it is an injury to the commonwealth, of which he is a part. A private person, as he cannot execute wrath and vengeance, or inflict punishment on an offender of the law; so neither can he let go unpunished one that has offended against the peace and good of the commonwealth: these are things that belong to the civil magistrate, to one in power and authority; and a judge that acts under another, and according to a law which he is obliged to regard, can neither inflict punishment, nor remit it, without the order of his superior. God indeed is not under another, he is of himself, and can do what he pleases; he is the maker and judge of the law; but then lie is a law to himself; his nature is his law, and he cannot act contrary to that. Wherefore as *Joshua* says, *chap. 24:19*, he is an holy God: he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions, nor your sins; that is, without a satisfaction to his justice, which is his nature, and to his law, which is his will, the honour of both which he is jealous of; sin is *crimen læsæ majestatis*, "a crime committed against the majesty of God;" it disturbs the universe of which he is the governor, and tends to shake and overthrow his moral government of the world; it introduces atheism into it, and has a tendency to bring it into disorder and confusion; and to withdraw creatures from their dependence on God, and their obedience to him; and therefore requires satisfaction, and an infinite one, it being objectively infinite, as committed

against an infinite Being; and therefore satisfaction for it cannot be made by a finite, but by an infinite person, as Christ is; and such a satisfaction the honour of the divine Being, and of his righteous law transgressed by sin, requires; which leads to observe, that to forgive sin without a satisfaction, does not accord with the perfections of God.

1. Not with his justice and holiness: God is naturally and essentially just and holy; all his ways and works proclaim him to be so; he is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works; all creatures acknowledge his justice and holiness; angels ascribe the same to him; the angel of the waters said, Thou art righteous, O Lord; devils must confess it; men good and bad own it; wicked Pharaoh said, The Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked: the good prophet Jeremiah, and even when distressed about the providences of God, and under a temptation about them, could not but acknowledge the justice of God, Righteous art thou, O Lord—yet let me talk with thee of thy judgments. God the righteous Lord loves righteousness, and hates iniquity; he is of purer eyes than to behold it with delight; he is not a God that takes pleasure in sin, but bears an utter hatred to it; he cannot but hate it, and shew his hatred of it, which he does by punishing it; and punitive justice is essential to him, though the Socinians, in order to enervate the doctrine of Christ's satisfaction, deny it; but God is a Consuming fire; and as it is natural to fire to burn combustible matter put to it, so it is natural to God to punish sin and consume sinners with the fire of his wrath, comparable to thorns and briars. The righteousness of God is seen and known by the judgments which he executes in the punishment of sin and sinners, for which he is applauded, commended and praised; it is a righteous thing with God to render tribulation to them that trouble his people; his judgments on antichrist and the antichristian states, are pronounced true and righteous by angels and saints, by the angel of the waters, and by the voices of much people in heaven, Rev. 16:6, 7 and chap. 19:1, 2. And the last judgment will be a righteous one, when sinners will be judged according to their works, and sentenced to everlasting punishment: nor does it comport with the justice of God to let sin and sinners go unpunished.

2. Nor with the truth and veracity of God, with respect to his holy and righteous law. God had a right

to give a law to his creatures, and it became him as the Governor of the universe to give a law to them; for where there is no law, there is no transgression; men may live with impunity, no charge can be brought against them: sin is not imputed where there is no law; but God has given a law, which is holy, just, and good, and which shews what is his good and perfect will; and this law has a sanction annexed unto it, as every law should have, or it will be of no force to oblige to an observance of it, and deter from disobedience to it; and the sanction of the law of God is nothing less than death, than death eternal, which is the just wages and proper demerit of sin; and which God has declared he will inflict on the transgressor, in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die; which as it was the sanction of that positive law, is of every moral precept. Now the veracity, truth, and faithfulness of God are engaged to see the sanction established and threatening executed, either upon the transgressor himself, or on a surety for him; for the judgment of God, is, that such a person is worthy of death and his judgment is according to truth, and must and will most certainly take place; let God be true and every man a liar.

3. Nor does it agree with the wisdom of God, that sin should be forgiven without a satisfaction for it. It is not the wisdom of any legislature to suffer the law not to take place on a delinquent; it is a weakness whenever it is admitted; and is either through fear of some persons or things, or through favour and affection, and the influence of some about the throne of a prince; it may be called tenderness, lenity, and clemency, but it is not justice: nor is it an act of prudence; the consequences of it are bad; it tends to weaken the authority of the legislature, to bring government into contempt, and to embolden transgressors of the law; in, hope of escaping with impunity; the all-wise lawgiver will not act such a part: besides, the scheme of man's reconciliation and redemption by Christ, is represented as the highest act of wisdom known to be formed and brought about by God; for herein he has abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence: but where is the consummate wisdom of it, if it could have been done in an easier way, with less expense, without the sufferings and death of his Son? Had there been another and better way of saving sinners, infinite

wisdom would have found it out, and divine grace and mercy would have pursued it.

4. Nor does it seem so well to comport with the great love and affection of God to his Son Jesus Christ, called his beloved Son, his dear Son, the Son of his love, to send him into this world in the likeness of sinful flesh, to be vilified and abused by the worst of men; to be buffeted, lashed, and tortured by a set of miscreants and to put him to the most cruel, painful, and shameful death of the cross, in order to make reconciliation and atonement for sin, if sin could have been forgiven and the sinner saved without all this; even by a hint, a nod, a word speaking to a sinner, telling him his iniquities were forgiven, and he should be saved: nor does it so fully express the love of God to his saved ones, but tends to lessen and lower their sentiments of it. God giving his Son to suffer in the room and stead of sinner's, to die for them while they were sinners, to be the propitiation or propitiatory sacrifice for their sins, is always ascribed to the love of God, and represented as the strongest expression of it; but where is the greatness of this love, if salvation could be effected with less expense, and at an easier rate? and indeed if it could have been done in any other way: the greatness of his love appears in this view, either the sinner must die, or Christ must die for him; now rather than the elect sinner should die, such was the love of God to him, that he chose His only-begotten Son should die for him.

To evince the necessity of a satisfaction for sin, in order to forgiveness of it, it may be further observed, that there is something of it appears by the light of nature in the sentiments and practices of the heathens, who had nothing else to direct them in this affair; which though it did not provide and direct to a proper satisfaction for sin, yet gave some hint of the necessity of one: by the light of nature they were led to see the evil of sinful actions, at least of some of them; hence accusations of conscience in them upon sinning: they were also sensible by it, that when sin was committed, deity was offended, and even angry with them, and incensed against them; hence those dreadful horrors and terrors of mind in them, lest they should be punished by it; they saw it was necessary that deity should be appeased some way or another; hence the various, though foolish and fruitless methods, they

took to appease the anger of God; and some even barbarous and inhuman as to give their first-born for their transgressions, and the fruit of their bodies for the sins of their souls; which shews their sense of a necessity of making some sort of satisfaction for offences committed, and of appeasing justice, or vengeance, as they call their deity; Acts 28:4. As for the Jews, who were favoured with a divine revelation, the case is quite clear with them, that they had knowledge of the doctrine of satisfaction for sins, and pardon upon the foot of it; and were directed by the sacrifices they were instructed to offer, to the proper method of satisfaction for sin and pardon of it, through the sufferings and death of the Messiah: all their sacrifices, especially those of a propitiatory kind, were typical of it, and plainly shewed the necessity of a satisfaction for sin; and plainly pointed out forgiveness as proceeding upon it: how often in the book of Leviticus is it said, that the priest should make atonement for the sins of the people, and their sins should be forgiven them? see chap 4:20, 26, 31, 35, and chap. 5:10, 13, 16, 18, and chap. 6:7. Indeed these did not and could not really, only typically, expiate sin, and make atonement for it; but if God could forgive sin, without any satisfaction at all, why not forgive it on the foot of such sacrifices? The true reason is, and it is plain, because he could not, consistent with himself and his own perfections, do it without the sacrifice of his Son, typified by them. Wherefore, upon the whole, it may be strongly concluded, that a plenary satisfaction for sin by what Christ has done and suffered, was absolutely necessary to the forgiveness of sin; without shedding of blood is no remission: there was no typical remission under the law, without the shedding of the blood of animals; and there was no real remission or forgiveness of sins then or now, without the shedding of the blood of Christ, Heb. 9:22, there never was, nor never could be, any without it.

There are various objections made to this doctrine; some of the more common and principal ones I shall take notice of, and return a brief answer to.

1. It is suggested, as if the doctrine of satisfaction for sin to the justice of God, and as required and received by that, is inconsistent with the mercy of God, and leaves no room for it. But the attributes of justice and mercy are not contrary to each other, they

subsist and accord together in the same divine nature. God is described by them both, gracious is the Lord and righteous; yea, our God is merciful, Ps. 116:5; merciful, though righteous; and righteous, though gracious and merciful; see Exod. 34:6, 7; and, and as they agree as perfections in the divine Being, so in the exercise of them they do not clash with one another, no not in this affair of satisfaction; here mercy and truth are met together, and righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Justice being satisfied, a way is opened for mercy to display liner stores.

2. It is objected, that pardon of sin upon the foot of a full satisfaction for it, cannot be said to free; this, it is suggested, eclipses the glory of God's free grace in the forgiveness of sin: it is certain that remission of sin is through the tender mercy of God, and is owing to the multitude of it; it is according to the riches of free grace, and yet through the blood of Christ, and both are expressed in one verse as agreeing together; in whom (Christ) we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace, Ephes. 1:7. The free grace of God is so far from being eclipsed in the forgiveness of sin through the satisfaction of Christ, that it shines the brighter for it; for consider, it was the free grace of God which provided Christ to be a sacrifice for sin, to atone for it; as Abraham said to Isaac, when he asked, Where is the lamb for a burnt-offering? My son, says he, God will provide himself a Lamb for a burnt-offering, Gen. 22:7, 8; so God of his rich grace and mercy has provided Christ to be an offering and a sacrifice for sin; and his grace appears the more, in that it is his own Son, his only-begotten Son, he provided to be the atoning sacrifice, the lamb to take away the sin of the world: it was grace that set him forth in the divine purposes and decrees, proposed him in counsel and covenant, and sent him forth in time to be the propitiation for sin; it was grace to us that he spared him not, put delivered him up for us all; and it was grace in God to accept of the satisfaction made by Christ; for though it was so full and complete as nothing could be more so, yet it would have been a refusable one, had he not allowed Christ's name to be put in the obligation. Had it not been for the compact and covenant agreed to between them, God might in strict justice have marked our iniquities, and insisted on a satisfaction at our hands;

he might have declared, and abode by it, that the soul that sinned, that should die; it was therefore owing to the free grace and favour of God, to admit of a surety in our room, to make satisfaction for us; and it was grace to accept of that satisfaction, as if made by ourselves. Besides, though it cost Christ much, his blood, his life, and the suffering of death, to make satisfaction for sin, and procure the forgiveness of it by it; forgiveness costs us nothing, it is all of free grace to us. Moreover, grace in scripture is only opposed to the works of men, and satisfaction by them, but not to the work of Christ, and his satisfaction.

3. It is pretended, that the scheme of pardon, upon a satisfaction, makes the love of Christ to men greater than that of the Father, and so they are more beholden to the one than to the other; it represents the one as tenderly affectionate, compassionate, and kind to sinners; and the other as inexorable, not to be appeased, nor his wrath turned away without satisfaction to his justice: but the love of both is most strongly expressed in this affair of Christ's satisfaction; and he must be a daring man that will take upon him to say, who of them shewed the greatest love, the Father in giving His Son, or the Son in giving himself, to be the propitiatory sacrifice for sin; for as it is said of Christ, that he loved the church, and gave himself for her; and loved us and gave himself for us; and loved me, says the apostle, and gave himself for me, Ephes. 5:2, 25; Gal. 2:20. So it is said of the Father, that he so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son to suffer and die for men; and that herein his love was manifested, not that we loved God, but he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins; and that he commended his love towards us, in delivering up his Son to death for us, and that while we were yet sinners; John 3:16; 1 John 4:9, 10; Rom. 5:8. Can there be greater love than this expressed by both? and which is greatest is not for us to say.

4. It is said, if Christ is God, a divine person, he must be a party offended by sin; and if he has made satisfaction for it, he must have made satisfaction to himself, which is represented as an absurdity. All this will be allowed, that Christ is truly God, a divine person in the deity, and as such equally offended with sin as his divine Father; and that he made satisfaction, and that in some sense to himself too, and yet no

absurdity in it, There are some cases in which men may be said to make satisfaction to themselves, without being charged with absurdity: indeed in case of a private pecuniary loss, it would be a mere farce, and quite absurd for one to repair the loss, and make it up to himself, and make satisfaction to himself for it; but in case of a public offence to a community, of which he is a part, he may be said, by making satisfaction to the whole body, to make satisfaction to himself, without an absurdity. So a member of parliament, having violated the laws and rules of the house, and is called to the bar to make satisfaction, when he makes satisfaction to the house, he may be said to make it to himself, as a member of it. It is possible for a lawgiver to make satisfaction to his own law broken, amid so to himself, as the lawgiver. Thus Zaleucus, "a famous legislator, made a law which punished adultery with the loss of both eyes; his own son was the first that broke this law, and in order that the law might have full satisfaction, and yet mercy be shewn to his son, he ordered one of his own eyes and one of his son's to be put out; and so he might be said to satisfy his own law, and to make satisfaction to himself, the lawgiver." But in the case before us, the satisfaction made by Christ, is not made to God personally considered, that is, to any one person in the Deity singly and separately, but to God essentially considered in all the three persons, or rather to the justice of God subsisting in the divine nature common to the three persons. This perfection subsisting in the divine nature as possessed by the first person, the Father, is offended with sin, resents it, requires satisfaction for it, and it is given by the second person in human nature, or as God-man; the same divine perfection subsisting in the divine nature as possessed by the second person, the Son of God, shews itself in like manner in loving righteousness and hating iniquity, is affronted by sin, and demanding satisfaction for it, it is given it by him as the God-man and mediator; who, though a person offended, could mediate for the offender, and make satisfaction for him, without any absurdity or contradiction, as making satisfaction to himself. The same may be observed concerning the justice of God, as a perfection of the divine nature possessed by the third person, the Spirit, requiring satisfaction, and having it given by Christ, the surety and Saviour of

sinner; so that the satisfaction is not made to one person solely and singly, but to the justice of God in all his persons; who is the Lord, Judge, and Governor of the whole world; and who ought to maintain, and does and will maintain the honour of his justice, and of his glorious majesty, and of his righteous law.

5. Once more, it is said, that this doctrine of Christ's satisfaction for sin, weakens men's obligation and regard to duty, and opens a door to licentiousness; but this is so far from being true, that on the contrary it strengthens the obligation, and excites a greater regard to duty, and promotes holiness of life and conversation in those who have reason to believe that Christ has made satisfaction for their sins; for the love of Christ in dying for them, in being made sin, and a curse for them to satisfy for their sins, constrains them in the most pressing manner to live to him, according to his will and to his glory; being bought with the price of Christ's blood, and redeemed from a vain conversation by it; they are moved the more strongly to glorify God with their bodies and spirit, which are his, and to pass the time of their sojourning here in fear. The grace of God which has appeared in the gift of his Son, and in Christ's gift of himself, to be the Redeemer and Saviour of ins people, and to be their atoning sacrifice and reconciler, teaches them most effectually to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in thin is evil world, 2 Cor. 5:14; 1. Cor. 6:20, 1 Peter 1:17, 18; Titus 2:11, 12. To close with a word or two:

1. We may learn from hence the vile nature of sin, the exceeding sinfulness of it, what an evil and bitter thing it is; that nothing can make atonement and give satisfaction for it, but the bloodshed, sufferings, and death of Christ.

2. We may observe the strictness of divine justice, that would make no abatement, but insisted upon Christ's doing and suffering all that the law could require to make satisfaction for the sins of his people; and if it spared not the Son of God, standing in their room and stead, but demanded and had full satisfaction at his hands, it will not spare Christless sinners, who have no interest in his satisfaction; and what a fearful thing will it be to fall into the hands of the living God, the judge of the whole earth, who will do right?

3. Let us admire and adore the perfections of God, his wisdom, righteousness, and holiness, as well as his love, grace and mercy, which shine so gloriously in this affair of satisfaction and reconciliation for sin made by the blood of Christ; for it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

16 The Elect Of God, Chosen Vessels Of Salvation, Filled With The Oil Of Grace.

2 KINGS 4:6

And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed.

IN the context is related a very remarkable case. A certain widow of a prophet, applied unto Elisha for relief in her distressed circumstances; and in a very wonderful manner was delivered. Her husband was one of the sons of the prophets. Who he was, cannot with certainty be said. The Jews commonly suppose he was Obadiah; for no other reason, I conceive, but that of his fearing the Lord. Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest, that thy servant did fear the Lord. (2 Kings 4:1) It is said of Obadiah, that he feared the Lord from his youth; (2 Kings 18:12) otherwise, he was a steward of Ahab's family, and so does not appear to be the son of a prophet. Be this as it may, the prophet, the husband of this woman, was dead. This is the lot of prophets, as well as others. Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever? (Zech. 1:5) This prophet, it seems, was a poor man; which was very frequently the lot of such persons. More than this, he died insolvent. His widow and children were therefore in great distress, on that account. The creditor, who was a severe man, took the two sons of the widow for bondmen, to sell them, in order to pay the debt; which was usual in those countries, at that time. To which our Lord seems to refer in the parable of the king, who called his servants to account: one of whom owed ten thousand talents, and had nothing to pay. He therefore commanded him, his wife, and children, and all that he had to be sold, and payment to be made. In like manner the creditor of the husband of this poor widow was about to proceed. Therefore she applied to Elisha, being

the chief of the prophets in those days, and who had great interest with God in prayer, and great gifts in performing miracles; so that she might conclude from one, or both these circumstances, that she might meet with relief from him. After she had told her case, thus, Thy servant, my husband, is dead, and thou knowest that thy servant did fear the Lord; and the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons, to be bondmen. Elisha said unto her, What shall I do for thee? what do you expect from me, a poor prophet? Tell me, what hast thou in thine house? and she said, Thine handmaid hath not any thing in the house, save a pot of oil. Then he orders her to go to borrow of her neighbours, empty vessels; and of those, not a few. Then bids her, when she had got as many as she could, to go into the house, with her two sons, and pour out the oil into these empty vessels. She did so, and it was multiplied, as she poured it out. The pot, or vessel, was, no doubt, a small one; yet so miraculously was the oil multiplied, that it filled all the vessels she could get together. When she had filled them all, she asked for another vessel; one of her sons tells her there is no more. They were all full; and then the oil was stayed.

Now this being done, the prophet ordered her to sell this oil, to pay her debt, and live upon the rest. Thus she was extricated out of her present difficulties, and had a sufficient maintenance for herself and sons. A most wonderful event this!

Having stated to you the connection of the text, with the preceding verses, and given you a short account of this remarkable part of Scripture history, what I shall endeavour further to do is, to accommodate the subject in the following way.

I. By considering the oil in a figurative sense; as expressive of the grace of God, to which it is sometimes in Scripture compared.

II. By comparing these vessels to the chosen vessels of salvation; which, while in a state of nature, are empty ones.

III. By shewing, that the oil of grace is put into them; and enquire when they may be said to be vessels full. And,

IV. By observing, That when all the chosen vessels are full, the communication of the oil of grace will cease; and not till then.

I. I shall consider the oil in a figurative sense, as expressive of the grace of God. Sometimes indeed the

word oil is used to signify temporal blessings. The land of Canaan, among other descriptions of it, has this for one, that it was a land of oil-olive: abounding with all temporal good things, both for conveniency and delight. When a famine is expressed, it is sometimes signified by the labour of the olive failing: while plenty of the things of this world is signified by that hyperbolical expression, rivers of oil. The great plenty Job possessed, before his troubles, is expressed by himself, in such language as this; The rock poured me out rivers of oil. (Job 29:6) That is, he was supplied with very great plenty of temporal things. Now, generally speaking, the vessels full of this sort of oil, are the children of this world; whose belly Jehovah is said to fill with his hidden treasures: and who have as much of this kind, as heart can wish.—Sometimes the term oil is but for spiritual blessings, and plenty of them. Thus runs a prophecy of gospel times; They shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden: (Jer. 31:12) by all which are meant not the outward blessings of life; but inward and spiritual ones. Of which, when the souls of God's people are made partakers, they become like a watered garden; very prosperous and flourishing. By these may be meant, those spiritual blessings, with which the saints are blessed in heavenly things in Christ Jesus. Happy those persons, who with Naphtali, are satisfied with the special grace of God, and are full of the blessings of the Lord. The Lord's people may say, as Jacob did, I have enough: or, as it is in the original text, I have all things. For a believer has all things pertaining to life and godliness. He has an interest in all the blessings of life and salvation. All are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's. (1 Cor. 3:23) Sometimes oil, in a figurative sense, intends the gospel, and the precious doctrines of it, So in Zechariah 4:11, 12, you read of two olive-trees standing before the Lord of the whole earth, which emptied the golden oil out of themselves, through the golden pipes or channels. By these two olive-trees are meant the ministers of the gospel, the prophets of the Old Testament, and the apostles and ministers of the New. By the golden oil, emptied out of themselves, the gospel is meant, which they have in their earthen vessels and which they, through the ministration of the word and ordinances, empty out

of themselves into other proper vessels, that are made so by the Lord. Such were the three thousand, who received the word gladly; and all others, into whose hearts it is brought, and it becomes the engrafted word. They receive it, not as the word of man; but as it is in truth, the word of God. (1 Thess. 2:13)

Sometimes oil designs, in a figurative sense, the Spirit of God, the gifts of the Spirit, and even the more extraordinary gifts of the Spirit; such with which the human nature of Christ was endowed without measure. Thus it is said in a prophecy of him: thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellow's. (Psa. 45:7) This the apostle Peter interprets of the Holy Ghost; for speaking of Christ, he says, Ye know how that God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost. (Acts 10:38) That oil of gladness, is no other than the Holy Ghost: his gifts and graces, with which Christ was anointed above his fellows; or above the many brethren, among whom he is the first-born. He received the Spirit of God and his gifts without measure, while they have them in measure.

But in other places we find oil is made use of, to express the ordinary communications of the grace of God to his people. Thus we are to understand it in the parable of the virgins. The foolish virgins took no oil in their vessels with their lamps, as the wise ones did: they were not concerned about that, as the others were. By which oil in their vessels with their lamps, we are to understand the true grace of God in the heart, with the lamp of an external profession. Now this is that anointing, that unction saints receive from the Holy One, Jesus Christ; or that grace which every one of them receives out of his fullness, even grace for grace; an abundance of grace, and the gift of righteousness. This is signified by oil; either in allusion to the holy anointing oil, made by divine appointment for sacred uses, under the former dispensation; or in allusion to oil in common. The anointing oil, made by divine appointment for sacred uses, was a very peculiar composition. It was made of the principal spices, with peculiar art, and none was to be made like unto it. The matter of it was the principal spices; such as myrrh, cinnamon, sweet calamus, cassia, and oil-olive. And it is easy to observe, that by each of these, the grace of the Spirit is signified in Scripture. Of that grace, myrrh, in the language of Scripture, is frequently an emblem. So Christ, in the communication of grace to

150 THE ELECT OF GOD, CHOSEN VESSELS OF SALVATION, FILLED WITH THE OIL OF GRACE his people, is said to be like a bundle of myrrh (Song 1:13) unto them; sweet smelling myrrh. He is said (being ornamented with the graces of the Spirit) to be perfumed with myrrh and frankincense. (Song 3:6) It is said of the church, when the various graces of the Spirit were in exercise, that her hands dropped with myrrh, and her fingers with sweet smelling myrrh upon the handle of the lock. (Song 5:5) Christ, her beloved is said to come into his garden, and gather his myrrh with his spices: (Song 5:1) expressive of that peculiar pleasure he takes in the exercise of his own grace in the hearts of his people. Cinnamon, was also a principal spice; very delightful and pleasant. It is reckoned among the chief spices. (Song 4:14) It was in former times more especially very rare. So grace is a rare thing; for the generality of men have it not; only those to whom it is given. Very refreshing and cheering this spice is and the Lord's people are, at times, filled with joy and peace in believing. It is very acceptable to God himself; and indeed, without faith, it is impossible to please God. (Heb. 11:6)

Another of the principal spices of which this anointing oil was made, was sweet calamus, or sweet canes, which come from a far country; as it is expressed in Jeremiah. (Jer. 6:20) Very proper, therefore, to express the grace of God by, which comes from heaven: for a man can receive nothing of this kind, unless it be given him from above. This shews the nature of the grace of God in the hearts of his people, especially when in exercise. It is a sweet smelling savour to the Lord himself. Thou hast ravished mine heart with one of thine eyes, (says Christ, meaning faith) with one chain of thy neck. How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse! how much better is thy love than wine! and the smell of thing ointments than all spices! (Song 4:10) For like reasons also, the grace of God may be signified by cassia, a sweet smelling herb, or plant, mentioned among other odoriferous ones. All thy garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia. (Psa. 45:8) To these were added, oil-olives. Now, as the church is sometimes compared to the olive-tree, so our Lord Jesus Christ is the true olive-tree, from whom this oil springs; or grace from his fulness, is received.

As the sacred anointing oil was a composition of various spices, so the grace of God in the heart, consists of faith, hope, love, and other fruits of the Spirit. As that compound was to be put together,

according to the art of the apothecary, as we are told; (Exod. 30:25) so the grace of God is a curious piece of workmanship; exceedingly delightful; and is not made by man, but by the Lord himself. For regenerating grace is not of blood, nor of the will of man, but of God. He only works in us to will and to do, of his own good pleasure. There was nothing to he made like unto this composition; signifying, that counterfeit grace is not to be accounted as grace. A feigned faith may be, where there is no grace. There may be a hypocritical hope, which is as the giving up of the ghost; and there may be dissembled love, which is in word only, and not in deed, and in truth; but no account is to he made of such counterfeit graces.

The nature of this oil was such, that it is said to be holy, and durable. It is called the holy anointing oil; so grace is, in its own nature, and in its effects, holy. The several graces of the Spirit of God make up that work of grace upon the heart, which is commonly called by the name, Sanctification. Every grace is holy. Faith is holy, in its nature and effects. It works by love, and is productive of good works. It purifies the heart, as it deals with the precious blood of Jesus. He that has a good hope through grace; founded on the person, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ; purifies himself, by dealing with that blood and righteousness, even as he is pure. Love influences men to obey the commandments and ordinances of a blessed Redeemer. If ye love me, keep my commandments. And as that holy anointing oil was throughout the generations of Israel, always to continue; so the graces of the Spirit of God are abiding. Now abideth these three, faith, hope, and charity, or love. These always continue. The grace of God in the hearts of his people, is a fountain of living water, springing up to everlasting life: an immortal seed.

As to the use of this oil; there is an agreement between that, and the grace of God. It was to anoint the tabernacle, the vessels thereof, and divers persons. To anoint the tabernacle, typical of the human nature of Christ; that tabernacle which God pitched, and not man. The Holy One was filled with the graces of the Spirit above measure, to anoint his people: who are sometimes called tabernacles, are the Lord's anointed ones, and go by the name of Christians, from their anointing. The holy oil was also to anoint the various vessels of the Sanctuary: and, by the grace of God, the

chosen vessels of salvation are anointed; the vessels of mercy afore prepared for glory. By this the Lord's people are made vessels meet for their Master's use.

This oil was intended also to anoint persons with; namely, Aaron and his sons, the priests, typical of our great High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is consecrated for ever more. And as the ointment was poured upon Aaron's head, and ran down to his beard and to the skirts of his garments; so the grace of God which is poured upon the head of our great High Priest, from him descends to all the members of his mystical body. And as the High Priests were consecrated with this oil; so are all believers: for they are made priests unto God; to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Nay, in virtue of this, they present themselves a holy and acceptable sacrifice to God, which is their reasonable service.

The prophets of old were also anointed with oil, to point them out as persons intended for that office: and our Lord Jesus Christ was anointed for that purpose, according to Isaiah 61:1. The spirit of the Lord God is upon me: because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek. So all the Lord's people are, by the grace of the Spirit, made, in some sense, prophets; for that anointing which they receive teaches them all things. The people of God not only learn much by reading the word of God, and hearing it preached by the ministers thereof; but also by their own experience. Those who have received the grace of God, have a witness in themselves to the truth of what they read and hear; and thereby are qualified, in some sort, to teach others, by conference and conversation.

Moreover, as Kings were anointed with oil; so our Lord Jesus Christ is for the same reason called the Messiah, or the anointed one: I have set, or anointed, my King over my holy hill of Sion. So all the saints are made kings, as well as prophets. They are all anointed, by the grace of God, as kings. And this grace reigns in them, through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord. Thus, in allusion to the holy anointing oil, the grace of God is frequently expressed by the word oil.

So it may also, in allusion to oil in common; which is of a very refreshing delightful nature. Hence it was made use of in ancient times, and in the eastern countries more especially, for the refreshment of travelers after their journey, and for the pleasure of

guests, at a feast: to the latter of which David alludes, when he says, Thou anointest my head with oil: my cup runneth over. So the disciples of Christ enjoy the grace of God, with spiritual pleasure and delight. Jehovah fills them with joy and peace in believing; for which reason, the grace of God is sometimes called the oil of joy that is given for mourning. Oil was made use of to beautify persons: as Esther and others made use of the oil of myrrh: so grace makes beautiful. It made the human nature of Christ beautiful: hence it is said, Thou art fairer than the children of men. How came he to be so, as a man? why it follows, Grace is poured into thy lips. Grace without measure bestowed upon him, made him fairer than all the sons of men. And in proportion as it is bestowed upon any of the sons of Adam, it makes them beautiful. The king's daughters are all fair: they appear in the beauty of holiness.—Grace, like oil, is of a fattening nature. Those who are partakers of it, in the exercise thereof, become fat and flourishing: fruitful in the house of the Lord our God.

Oil is of a supplying and healing nature. Hence where it is observed of the people of Israel, that the whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint; it is added, They have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment, or oil. So the man that had fallen into the hands of thieves, the Samaritan that found him, poured oil and wine into his wounds, for the healing of them. Grace, and particularly pardoning grace, is of this nature, so that the inhabitants of Sion, who are partakers thereof, have no reason to say, I am sick; for the people that dwell therein are forgiven their iniquities.—Once more, Oil is of such a nature that it will not mix with any other liquids, neither will grace mix with the corruption of our nature. Though grace and sin dwell in the same heart, they will not mix together; they will continue and appear to be distinct principles. The one is called the law in the members; the other, the law of the mind. The one, the old man; the other, the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. The one is called the flesh, and the other is called the spirit, and these two are contrary the one to the other, so that a man cannot do the thing that he would. I proceed now,

II. To observe, that the empty vessels into which this oil of grace is put, are no other than the elect of God, who, in themselves, are like empty vessels. They are often called vessels, with different epithets, though

152 THE ELECT OF GOD, CHOSEN VESSELS OF SALVATION, FILLED WITH THE OIL OF GRACE expressive of the same thing. Sometimes, chosen vessels; so Paul is said to be a chosen vessel, to bear the name of Christ, that is, the gospel. He was chosen, indeed, to something higher than saints in common: chosen to be an apostle, to have extraordinary gifts, and to do extraordinary work; but all the saints are in a sense chosen vessels also; chosen to enjoy grace here, and glory hereafter. In consequence of this choice they are, sooner or later, filled with the grace of God. For as many as were ordained to eternal life believed; they had the grace of God bestowed upon them, which is called the faith of God's elect. And they are not only chosen to that grace, but to all others. They are chosen to holiness in general; to sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. These are insured unto them by their being chosen, and they most certainly partake thereof, in order to enjoy eternal happiness. They are also called vessels of mercy, (Rom. 9:23) afore prepared unto glory. Vessels of mercy, not that they deserve the mercy of God more than others; for they are in no wise better than others, being all under sin. But they are vessels of mercy, through the sovereign good will of God to them; who will have mercy on whom he will have mercy. They are vessels filled with the mercy of God, in regeneration: when they, who had not obtained mercy, openly and visibly obtain mercy. The mercy of God is in a manifest way displayed in their regeneration and conversion. God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he loved them, quickens them when dead in trespasses and sins; and, according to his abundant mercy, begets them again to a lively hope of a glorious inheritance. Likewise through the grace of God bestowed upon them in conversion, they become vessels meet for their master's use, as the apostle expresses it. (2 Tim. 2:21) Now men, in a state of unregeneracy, are unmeet for every good work; but when persons are called by the grace of God, they are ready to every good work. They only are able and sufficient persons for that purpose, being created in Christ Jesus unto good works; having the Spirit of God bestowed upon them, to enable them to walk in the ways of the Lord, and to keep his statutes, and do them.

Some vessels are of a larger, and some of smaller size; but all are sooner or later filled. Some are strong in faith, and have a larger measure of that grace than others: some are weak in faith, and have a less degree

of it. Some are newborn babes; some are young men, and some fathers in Christ; but all in their natural state were empty vessels had nothing good in them. Vain man, (says Zophar, Job 11:12) or, as it may be rendered, EMPTY man, would be wise, though was born like the wild ass's colt. It is said of the house of unclean spirits, that when the man returned into it, he found it empty, swept and garnished. This is the case even with external professors, outwardly righteous men, who are destitute of the grace of God. For, however they may be garnished with some external performances, or outward professions, they are empty of the grace of God. Indeed, the elect of God, while in a state of unregeneracy, are without Christ and without God in the world. They are destitute of the image of God, in which our first parents were formed. God made man after his own image, and in his likeness; but that image is greatly defaced, and obliterated. All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; which lay chiefly in righteousness, and holiness. God made man upright; but he hath sought out many inventions. There is none righteous, no not one. Man hath nothing that deserves the name of righteousness, that will stand him in any stead to justify him in the sight of God. He is empty of righteousness, and full of all unrighteousness. He is empty of all that is good: for, if the apostle says of himself, that in him, that is, in his flesh, dwells no good thing: how can it be thought, that there should be any good thing in an unregenerate man. He is destitute of the fear of God; it is neither before his eyes, nor in his heart. As Abraham said of a certain town, Surely the fear of God is not in this place; so it may be said of every unregenerate man's heart, The fear of God is not in it.—Carnal men are empty of the true knowledge of God; without any knowledge of him, especially as he is revealed in Christ Jesus. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. So far from it, that the language of their souls is, Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.

They are without Christ; and empty of the knowledge of him: of faith in him, of love to him; and so of the Spirit, and his various graces. Sensual, not having the Spirit. (Jude 19) This now is the real condition of all men naturally. They are empty vessels not having the grace of God in them.

Now, in conversion, the Lord's people are made to

see, that they are these empty creatures, and as such, in order to the perfection of grace, or glory, in they come to Christ, and to his fulness to be filled from thence. No others, indeed, can receive out of his fulness; for if they are full, what can they receive from Christ? Paul, when addressing some vain, conceited professors in the church at Corinth, says: ye are full, ye are rich; like the Laodicean members, who thought they were rich, and increased in goods, and stood in need of nothing, when they were poor, and wretched, and miserable, and blind, and naked. Now let such persons come to Christ, what does it signify? They are so full, they can receive nothing from him; and they are sent away empty as they come. The rich he hath sent empty away. They came rich in their own conceit, and go away empty; but sensible souls, who see their emptiness of the grace of God, and the need they stand in of coming to Christ, are filled. He filleth the hungry with good things.

III. I am to take some notice of the vessels being filled. We have compared the oil to the grace of God, and the empty vessels to the chosen vessels of salvation. Now let us enquire when they may be said to be full vessels? I answer, when they are filled with the Holy Ghost, as some persons in Scripture are said to be. The first churches were ordered to look out such men for deacons. Acts 6:3. And Stephen, one of them, is said to be, Acts 7:55. The same is said of Peter and others, which, as it relates to them, denotes that they had superior gifts of the Spirit, whereby they are capable of defending the truth against opposers, with boldness, courage and intrepidity of mind; and as at that time the church consisted of all nations, who spake different languages, so they were filled with the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, especially that of speaking with divers tongues. But while some have been filled with the gifts and graces of the Spirit in an extraordinary way, others have been so, in an ordinary way, as common believers: and who may be said to be so when the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts by the Spirit; when they are full of joy and peace in believing, and are filled with the knowledge of the will of God in Christ, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. In a word, then may the chosen vessels of salvation be said to be filled, when they have received so much grace from Christ (in whom the fullness of it dwells) as shall make them meet for heaven; for out of his fullness they do receive grace in

the other.

IV. When all the vessels of salvation are thus filled, then will cease to flow the communications of grace, and not till then. Grace has been running ever since the fall of Adam. It has been flowing from the beginning of time, before the flood, and since the flood; and how many millions of vessels have been filled since grace began to be poured out! It is still flowing; and every vessel of mercy shall be sooner or later filled. Grace will continue to be dispensed till the last chosen vessel is called and filled. And then (to refer to the language of the prophet, when the head stone is brought forth) there will be general shoutings, crying, Grace, Grace, unto it.

On the whole, you have, related in the text and context, a most surprising fact. A miracle is wrought for the supply of a prophet's widow and her family. We hence see what notice God takes of the families of his prophets. Let widows be encouraged, and prophets' widows especially, to trust in the Lord, and to leave their fatherless children with him. Let it be an instruction to us all to pay an attention to such persons and their families. We are to imitate God, and though we cannot work miracles, yet we are to do good and to communicate, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

17 A Principle Of Grace In The Heart, A Good Thing Always Tending Towards The Lord God Of Israel.

1 KINGS 14:13

Because in him there is found some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel.

The whole verse reads thus, And all Israel shall mourn for him; for he only, of Jeroboam, shall come to the grave; because in him was found some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel, in the house of Jeroboam.

These words are spoken of Abijah, son of Jeroboam, king of Israel. He was now sick, and Jeroboam was concerned for him. He wanted to know what would become of him; whether he would recover from his sickness, or not. Therefore he sends his wife to Abijah the prophet, upon this errand: but, as he knew the prophet had no good opinion of him (a dislike to him, indeed, because of his idolatry), he orders his wife to

disguise herself, and go as a country-woman, with presents to the prophet, to know what would become of the child. She goes; but as soon as she enters the prophet's house, he, being before apprized of it by the Lord, gives her to understand he knew who she was: told her, he had a message from the Lord, that would be disagreeable to her, and her family; namely, that God, for the idolatry of her husband, had determined to cut off her whole family: that such of them as died in the city should be eaten by dogs; and such as fell in the field, should be devoured by the fowls of the air: and that, as to the child she came to inquire about, he should die as soon as she got home, or before her feet entered the city. But in as much as he was a promising youth, he informs her, there would be a general lamentation for him by all Israel; and also, that he was the only one of the family that should be interred in a decent manner, for the reason given in the text; Because in him there was found some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel. It seems, there did appear in him some dislike of that idolatry his father had set up in the kingdom, and in his own family; and he had some regard to the pure worship of God; which raised the expectations of the people of Israel, that when there should be a change, things would be the better, both with regard to civil and religious affairs.

Those things which they observed in him, arose from a principle of grace, which the Lord had implanted in his heart, called, some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel.

The observation that I make upon these words, is, That in every regenerate person there is some good thing towards God; let him be of what family he will, or in what place he may. This child was the son of a king, brought up in a palace, educated in a family very idolatrous; and yet there was some good thing in him towards the Lord God of Israel.

The apostle Paul says indeed of himself, that in him, that is in his flesh, dwelt no good thing (Rom. 7:18): even then he was a regenerate person. How then must we understand the apostle, seeing it is manifest there is some good thing in every regenerate man; and no doubt was in him. It may be replied, there was no good thing in him naturally; for there is none that doeth good, no not one (Ps. 14:3); and the reason is, because there is no good thing in them. If there was, there

would be some good thing done by them; but there is no good thing in them naturally, and therefore there is none done by them. Paul means, there was no good thing in him, except what grace had produced: for if there be any good thing in man's heart, it is not by the power of man, but by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts. It is he that works in all good men, both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. There was no good thing in him, that he could call his own; whatever good thing was in him, it was from the Lord. Was he spiritually alive? it was not he that lived, but Christ that lived in him (Gal. 2:20). Did he perform so many great and good things, more than others? It was not he, but the grace of God, that was with him. Besides, there is a restrictive clause in that passage; In me, that is, in my flesh; which signifies there was some good thing in another part of him, though not in his flesh; or the old man, in whom there is no good; from whom nothing good comes; and by whom nothing good is done. But, in the inward man of the heart, there dwelt some good thing; and so it is, in every regenerate man.

I shall now endeavour to shew,

I. What that good thing is, which is in every regenerate man. II. That this good thing, is something in them.

III. That it is but some good thing, not every good thing; or however, that it is not every good thing complete.

IV. That this good thing in regenerate men, will be found in them, sooner or later. For in him is found some good thing.

V. That this good thing is sometimes found in a child, the child of a king; and one that comes from a bad family. Some good thing was in this young man in the house of Jeroboam. There is an emphasis upon that, in the house of Jeroboam; that sinful, vile, idolatrous family.

VI. Wherever there is a good thing in any, it is always towards the Lord God of Israel,

I. I shall inquire what this good thing is, that is in the heart of every regenerate man. In my last discourse I have shewn you what wickedness there is in the heart of man: and what the plague of a man's heart is; and now I shall shew you what goodness there is in a regenerate man's heart. This, in general, is no other than the good work of grace in the heart; which

the apostle calls a good work: Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ (Phil. 1:6). The efficient cause of it is good, even God; who is good essentially; independently good; and from whom every good thing comes. Whatever is done by him, must be good, whether in nature, providence, or grace. The work of creation, when he reviewed it, was declared to be very good. The work of the new creation, the spiritual workmanship of grace upon the soul, is also good, very good. The moving cause of this is the goodness, grace, and mercy of God, who, for the great love wherewith he loved us, hath quickened us, when dead in trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:4, 5). The mean, by which this work is generally wrought, is the good word of God. Of his own will begat he us, with the word of truth (Jam. 1:18). The effects thereof are good. It makes a man good: it enables him to do good works. It is productive of every thing that is good. The grace of God, not only as a doctrine, but more especially as a principle, influentially teaches men, that denying ungodliness and worldly lust, they should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world. Now it is this good work, in general, which is the good thing that is found in every regenerate man.

In particular it may design the various graces of the Spirit of God, which are wrought in the souls of those who are born again. Indeed the Spirit of God himself has a place in the hearts of such persons, as the author and finisher of this good thing, the work of grace: and who himself is good. Thy Spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness (Ps. 143:10). He is good himself, essentially good. Good in his influence, operations, gifts, and graces. He is promised in the covenant of grace; I will put my Spirit within them. He has, in conversion, a place in the hearts of his people; received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? (Gal. 3:2). And, indeed, this indwelling of the Spirit of God in the hearts of his people, is the grand criterion which distinguishes a regenerate from an unregenerate man: Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit. Ye are not in a carnal and unregenerate state, but in a spiritual and regenerate one; if so he that the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his (Rom. 8:9).

The Spirit of God is in his people, as the author of the good work of grace upon their souls. In consequence of his being there, a new heart is given them; a new spirit is put within them, in which are new principles of grace, holiness, life, love, joy, peace, and comfort; new desires, new affections, new resolutions; all things are become new. This is the new creature, the new man the Scripture speaks of; which is no other than an assemblage of the several graces of the blessed Spirit. The fruits and graces of the Spirit are many; the principal of which are these three, Faith, Hope, and Charity, or Love; but the greatest of them is love. Where one is, there are the others. Where Faith, the principal, cardinal, leading grace is, there is Hope; for Faith is the substance of things hoped for (Heb. 11:1): and there also is love; for faith works by love (Gal. 5:6). There are besides these, several other graces, which, altogether, make up this good thing that is found in every regenerate man, and which is towards the Lord God of Israel.

Thus, for instance, there is the grace of repentance towards God. In Acts 20:21, the apostle uses this phrase of the doctrine of repentance, and so of faith; but what he says of either of these, as a doctrine, is true of them as a grace; Repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. For true evangelical repentance, is no other than a godly sorrow, or a sorrow after a godly sort, and for sin because it is committed against a God of love, grace, mercy, and goodness. The Spirit of God convicts every man, that he powerfully works upon, of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; shews him the evil nature of sin, and the just demerit of it; shews it to him in the glass of the divine law, where he sees it in its proper colors; and thereby it becomes exceedingly sinful unto him; fills him with shame and confusion of soul; brings him to God in an humble manner to confess it, and causes a self-loathing and abhorrence, on account of his offences. Thus it was with Job, I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes (Job 42:6). There is no doubt to be made, of his having some good thing in him towards the Lord God of Israel, when he said these words. So there was undoubtedly in the poor publican, when he stood, and dared not so much as lift up his eyes

to heaven, and said, God be merciful to me a sinner. There was in him repentance towards God.

There is the fear of God, and that is a good thing. This the Lord, according to the tenor of the covenant of grace, puts into the hearts of his people, when he calls them by his grace. I will put my fear in their hearts (Jer. 33:40). This appears as early in conversion, as any grace whatever; for the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Prov. 9:10). As soon as ever a man is made, in any measure, wise to salvation, the fear of God appears in him. There is a tenderness of heart and conscience. He cannot do the things which others do, or which he himself before had done: as Nehemiah says of some that governed before him, that he did not, as they, because of the fear of the Lord. There is a fear implanted in their hearts of offending God; for the fear of the Lord, as the wise man defines it, is to hate evil, and depart from iniquity (Prov. 8:13).

There is love towards the Lord God of Israel, God appears in his amiable perfections, in the declarations and promises of his grace, and the expressions of his love. The love of God is shed abroad in the heart, and that causes him to love God. We love him, because he first loved us (John 4:19). Christ appears in all the loveliness of his person, offices, and grace; and in his love in dying for his people. Thus he becomes the object of such a soul's love, to such a degree, that he cannot but say as Peter did, Lord thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee (John 21:17). There is also love to the brethren, to the saints, upon whom the image of Christ appears: and by this it is known that such are passed from death to life; that they are born again, because they love the brethren (1 John 3:14). There is love to the good word and ways of God, the worship of God, and ordinances of God, and to every thing that is good.

There is also hope of happiness in another world. Though a man before conversion was without hope: yet being regenerated, he is begotten again to a lively hope. Christ being set before him as the object of hope, and he encouraged to flee to him, and lay hold upon him; he expects everlasting life. His hope is as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which enters into that within the veil (Heb. 6:19). This must be allowed to be some good thing surely; for it is called a good hope through grace (2 Thess. 2:16).

There is faith also; and that is another part of this good thing towards the Lord God of Israel. A sinner that is wrought upon, as just now described, trusts in God as his Saviour, and says, as Job did, though he slay me, yet will I trust in him and he also shall be my salvation (Job 13:15, 16). Now this faith is the gift of God unto him; it proceeds from the operation of the Spirit of God upon him, by the instrumentality of the word. Faith comes by hearing (Rom. 10:17); and it is productive of good works for faith without works is dead (James 2:20). Now this is some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel.

There are other graces also which I might mention such as patience, under afflictive dispensations of providence. For though no affliction is joyous, but grievous; yet it works the peaceable fruits of righteousness, to them who are exercised therewith and the chief of these is a peaceable frame of soul, or quietness of mind under the rod. Tribulation, to regenerate persons, sometimes is of use; to increase their patience, rather than to destroy it. Tribulation worketh patience (Rom. 5:3); is a mean of increasing it. The apostle James says, Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations (Jam. 1:2). He means, not the temptations of Satan; but afflictions, which are temptations, or trials, of the graces of God's people. For he adds, The trying of your faith worketh patience; and let patience have its perfect work (Jam. 1:4). When this appears in exercise, it is a clear case there is some good thing in such a person, towards the Lord God of Israel. When, like Aaron, they hold their peace under trying circumstances; and with David, are dumb because the Lord did it; are still and know that he is God, a sovereign Being, who does whatever he pleases.

There is also resignation to the will of God. Those who are not inured to afflictions, are like a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke; fret and are impatient under it. But where there is some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel; there will be, more or less, of submission to the will of God. Such will say, as Eli did; It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good. Not my will, but thine be done.

In a word, this good thing, found in the heart of a regenerate man towards the Lord God of Israel is, the sanctification of the Spirit, in all the several branches

thereof, of which those that I have mentioned are some. It is called the sanctification of the Spirit, because he is the author of it: for if we are sanctified, it is in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God (1 Cor. 6:11). This, in the present state, is imperfect; but is carrying on, and will be brought to perfection in all those in whom it is begun. The God of truth will sanctify us throughout, and will preserve our whole souls, bodies, and spirits, blameless, to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Where this is, there will appear many good things. The text says, some good thing: several good things it may be truly said. Good thoughts will arise in the hearts of such. For though the heart of man is bad, and so wicked as I represented unto you in my last discourse, though the thoughts of a carnal man's heart are only evil, and that continually and though regenerate persons have a great deal of reason to complain, of the vanity of their minds and the sinfulness of their thoughts; yet there are good thoughts arise in them, which are of God. I say, of God; because we cannot think a good thought, of ourselves (2 Cor. 3:5). But there do arise good thoughts concerning God, his being, perfections, and purposes; his love, his everlasting love to his people. We have thought of thy loving kindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple (Ps. 48:9) And O, how pleasant are the thoughts, how sweet the meditations of God's people, upon the everlasting love of God, and the fruits of it! It is pleasing to the Lord, when his people are thus thoughtful of him. A book of remembrance was written for them that thought upon his name (Mal. 3:16); upon his name as proclaimed, a God gracious and merciful, slow to anger, abundant in goodness and truth.

There are also good desires in the hearts of regenerate persons. The desires of their souls are to the name of the Lord, and to the remembrance of him. There are spiritual breathings after him, as the hart panteth after the water brooks. There are holy resolutions which are formed in their minds, under the influence of divine grace. In the strength of divine grace, they resolve to make mention of the Lord, of his righteousness, and of that only. In the strength of divine grace, they are enabled to resist sin; to strive against it, and to abstain from all appearance of evil: to resist Satan's temptations, and to do every good work.

It was the holy resolution of Joshua, and it shewed some good thing in him towards the Lord God of Israel, when he said, As for me, and my house, we will serve the Lord. Resolutions indeed, taken up in a man's own strength, signify nothing; but when they are made in the strength of divine grace, arising from an internal principle, they are of worth, and come to something. In short, where there is some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel, the good word of God dwells in the heart. The matter of this word is good, and the effects of it are good. Now this comes, not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance in the hearts of regenerate persons; where it works effectually, and where it dwells. It abides, it dwells richly in all wisdom. It is received in the love of it, and is highly esteemed, more than necessary food. It is more, to the Believer, than thousands of gold and silver. If now we put all these things together, and others that your own experiences may dictate, you will know in some good measure, what is that good thing that is in the heart of every regenerate man.

—But I go on,

II. To observe, that this good thing, possessed by regenerate persons, is something within them, The text says not, some good thing done by them; but some good thing in them, towards the Lord God of Israel: this good thing is all internal; nothing external. It is not an outward form of godliness: there may be that, where there is not the inward power. The apostle speaks of some that had a form of godliness, that is, the outward form, but denied the power (2 Tim. 3:5); that is, the inward power upon the heart. There may be a notion of things, where there is no grace. There may be an outward profession of faith, where there is no true faith; and an external obedience to the ordinances of the gospel, and yet this good thing may be wanting; as in Simon Magus, who professed to believe, but was destitute of true faith, and was in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity (Acts 8:23).

This good thing is not an outward reformation of manners. There may be this, and no good thing in the heart. Herod heard John gladly, seemed to have a great flow of affection for what he heard; yea, it is said, he did many things; that is, agreeable to what he heard preached: he did them externally. There was an

appearance of good things done by him, and yet there was no good thing in him. So the scribes and pharisees were outwardly righteous: looked like good men; made a fair shew in the flesh; and thought themselves very holy and religious; but inwardly, as our Lord says, were full of all manner of wickedness. So that there is a great difference between some good thing in a man, and such good things as may appear outwardly.

This good thing, is not an outward humiliation for sin; such as was in Pharaoh, while he was under the terror of the plagues of thunder, hail, and lightning; who cried out, The Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked (Ex.9:27); but, as soon as the storm was over, he returned to his former hardness of heart. Such a disposition was in Ahab, concerning whom the Lord says, See how Ahab humbleth himself (1 Kings 21:29): yet it was only an external humiliation; for there was no good thing in him. There may be a great many tears shed by persons, seeming on account of sin; but these are no true mark or sign of good things in them. Esau sought the blessing with tears, but found no place for repentance. Judas made a confession of sin, and yet there was no good thing in him.

An abstinence from the gross enormities of life, is not this good thing. Restraints may be laid upon persons, by their parents, masters, or civil magistrates; or through the force of conviction in an awakened conscience; which when over, they return like a dog to his vomit, and like a sow that is washed, to her wallowing in the mire. But this good thing is within a man: some good thing in him towards the Lord God of Israel; something in a man's heart. This appears by all the names that it goes by in Scripture. Sometimes it is called the inward man: I delight in the law of God, after the inward man, says the apostle (Rom 7:22). The inward man renewed day by day (2 Cor. 4:16). The hidden man of the heart (1 Pet. 3:4); or that which is out of sight, For he is not a Jew that is one outwardly. Circumcision is not that of the flesh, but of the heart. It is sometimes called spirit; not only from the author of it, the Spirit of God, (whatsoever is born of the Spirit of God, is Spirit [John 3:6]) but from the seat of it, the spirit or heart of man. He is renewed in he spirit of his mind (Eph. 4:23). It is sometimes called seed, which lies under ground; and is not to be seen: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but

of incorruptible (1 Pet. 1:23): the seed of the word; the seed of divine grace, which remains. Hence the apostle John says, such cannot sin, (that is, live in a course of sin) because their seed remains in them: that is, an inward principle of grace, which forbids them so to act. It is sometimes called a root. The root of the matter is found in me, says Job (Job 19:28). The root of the righteous, which is a hidden principle of grace in them, and brings forth much fruit. The reason why the stony ground hearers relinquished their profession, was, because there was no root (Matthew 13:6). Sometimes it is called oil in a vessel (Matthew 25:4). The lamp is an outward profession; the oil is an internal principle of grace in the heart. Sometimes it is signified by an epistle. Ye are our epistle, says the apostle (2 Cor. 3:2). God inscribes, upon the hearts of his people, his laws and his word. I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts (Jer. 31:33). All which shews, that this good thing is within a man.

This also is clear from the several parts of which this good thing consists. It includes in it, the illumination of the understanding, raising the affections to things above, where Jesus is; renewing of a man in the spirit of his mind: making of him willing, in the day of God's power, to submit unto his way of salvation, through the justifying righteousness of Jesus Christ; sprinkling the heart from an evil conscience, and the like; all which shews it to be an internal work.

III. This is but some good thing; not every good thing; or, however, not every good thing complete. There is a great deal, indeed, bestowed upon God's people, and wrought in them in their regeneration, and first conversion; for where sin abounded, grace does much more abound. The grace of God is exceeding abundant, with faith, and love, and every other grace. For as before observed, where one grace is, there is every grace. Where there is hope, there is faith; and where there is love, there are faith and hope. These always go together. Yet this good thing is imperfect in the best of saints. The good work of grace is but a begun work. It is, however, carrying on gradually, and will be performed till the day of Christ. Faith has its deficiency; hope is defective; love is imperfect; and we know but in part (1 Cor. 13:9). In some this good thing is very little, as at first conversion. It is a day

of small things with newly regenerate persons: little knowledge, faith, hope, and the like; and therefore compared to the bruised reed and smoking flax: and yet, by these appearances, it is clear there is some good thing. In the bruised reed there is a moistness which shews it to be alive; in the smoking flax there are fire and heat. So in the lowest believer, in the exercise of grace in the weakest manner, there appears some good thing in him (though it is but little) towards the Lord God of Israel. Some light in him, though it is but small: a little knowledge of himself, and the corruptions of his nature: a little knowledge of the person, offices, and excellencies of Christ: a little light in the doctrines of the everlasting gospel. It is as much as he can say, One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, I now see (John 9:25). He has sight, but it is glimmering, in comparison of the light he afterwards has; for the path of the just is as a shining light, which shines more and more to the perfect day.

There is affection evident, and more affection, perhaps, than judgment; and more zeal than knowledge; which is generally the case with young converts; yet for all this, there is some good thing. There is hope, though it is but in a small degree. Under all his discouragements, such an one can say, I will put my mouth in the dust; if so be, there may be hope. "I do not know whether there is any foundation for hope or no; but I will put my mouth in the dust, I will be in an humble manner at the feet of God. I am told there is hope in Israel concerning this thing; and therefore, I will encourage myself as much as I can, that there will be favour shewn to me, a wicked, miserable creature." Now, in these humble expressions, there is some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel. And yet, indeed, he does not abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost: he has not arrived to the full assurance of hope; but there is some good hope through grace, though it is but small. So faith, at first, is like a grain of mustard seed, which is the least of all seeds. There is but little faith, as our Lord says, in his address to his disciples, O ye of little faith (Matthew 6:30); and to Peter in particular, O thou of little faith (Matthew 14:31). Faith is but mere peradventure at first. The language of such a soul is, "I cannot say he will receive me; but I will venture upon him. If I perish, I perish." Now in this language there is some good thing towards

the Lord God of Israel. But,

IV. Wherever this good thing is, it will be found; for in him (says my text) is found some good thing. God has found it there: and there is very good reason why he finds it; because it was he himself who put it there.

The Lord knows the good thing he hath put into the hearts of his people, and he finds it. He sees not as man sees: he knows the heart, and sees what is in the heart. As it is said of our Lord, he knows what is in man. He knew what good was in the heart of Peter; he knew how he loved him. Though there was but very little seen of it when he had so lately, and so basely denied him; yet he knew himself, he had love in his heart to Christ, and he knew that Christ was acquainted with it. Lord (says he) thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee. So wherever there is any good, ever so small, towards the God of Israel, God will find it out, because he put it there. This also will be found by the person himself, sooner or later. Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith: Know ye not, that Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? (2 Cor. 13:5); except ye be void of judgment, as the word more properly signifies. It is not so well rendered reprobates; it being a word somewhat startling to the minds of men. "If ye are not spiritual persons, ye cannot know whether Christ is in you, or not; but if you have any spiritual knowledge, judgment, or feeling; then, upon reflection and self-examination, you will find Christ is in you. You will experience, if you observe it, some outgoings of your souls to Christ, and acts of faith and hope upon him." Thus this good thing in the hearts of God's people may be found by themselves.

So it is also by others, that converse with them. Such as fear the Lord, often speak one to another; and as they are speaking one to another, they find what good thing is in each other. Thus the apostle Paul, though in his former life he was an enemy to the Christian religion, when he came before Peter, James, and John, and they conversed with him, they perceived the grace of God in him. They found there was some good thing in him towards the Lord Jesus Christ, whom he had persecuted; and then they gave him the right hand of fellowship. And where there is some good thing in the heart, it will shew itself in the life and conversation; and it will be found at the great day of account. The

apostle says of faith, That it might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 1:7). And I am persuaded, that there is in many persons some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel, that does not appear now; and it may be, may never appear to satisfaction in this world: and yet will be found at the great day of accounts, when God will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the secrets of every heart; what he had wrought there.

V. This good thing is sometimes to be found in a Jeroboam's house; or in a wicked man's family; and is sometimes, as I observed, to be found in a youth. Jeroboam's son is, in this chapter, called a child: how old he was is not certain; but God works this good thing betimes in the hearts of some persons. Obadiah knew the Lord from his youth; and Timothy, from a child, knew the holy Scriptures. Those that seek the Lord early shall find him.

Sometimes this is found in one of princely birth, as this child was, the son of Jeroboam king of Israel, though it is a rare thing. For not many mighty, not many noble, not many wise men after the flesh, are called (1 Cor. 1:26): but some there are; some in the family of a king. All the saints salute you; chiefly they of Caesar's household (Phil. 4:22). Sometimes this good thing is found in one of a bad family. Jeroboam's family was a bad one. He was an idolater, and set up the calves of Dan and Bethel. It is often said of him, to his disgrace, Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, that made Israel to sin: and yet there was some good thing in his family; which shews grace does not run in a line. Good men are not born of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God (John 1:13). How many good men have had bad children? Eli's sons, and Samuel's sons, did not walk in their father's steps. And so it is, that some in the family of bad men are chosen by God. The Lord takes one of a family, and two of a tribe: takes one, and leaves another. Those who are instances of this kind, have abundant reason to admire distinguishing grace.

VI. This good thing, found in the heart of every regenerate person, always acts towards the Lord God of Israel. The bias of it is towards him sin inclines the mind to that which is evil: hence the imaginations of the thoughts of men's hearts are only evil, and that

continually. There is an aversion to God, and all that is good. The language of an unregenerate man is, Depart from me, I desire not the knowledge of thy ways; but where grace is, where this good thing is, it biases the mind towards God and Heaven. Wherever that exists, the language is, My soul thirsteth after God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God? As all grace comes from God, so it returns to him in its acts and exercises. Repentance is towards God. Faith, hope, and love are towards God. Every grace acts towards God; it is exercised upon him, and upon the Lord Jesus Christ: whom having not seen ye love, in whom though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory (1 Pet. 1:8). Christ is the object of faith, of love, of joy, and of every other grace.

Where this good thing is, the thoughts will be employed about God, and the affections, like pillars of smoke, perfumed with frankincense, will ascend towards him. The desires of the soul will be to his name, and to the remembrance of him. This good thing in the heart will operate and shew itself in thankfulness to God for all the good things bestowed. A man that has some good thing in him towards the Lord God of Israel, will call upon his soul, and all that is within him, to bless the name of the Lord. He will bless the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for all spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ; especially, for Christ, the unspeakable gift of his love. This good thing will cause a man to manifest his concern for the honour of God; for his cause and interest in the world. Such in whom this good thing is, love the habitation of his house, the place where his honour dwells. His tabernacles are amiable, and a day in his courts, is better than a thousand elsewhere. They cannot give themselves the liberty of being absent from the house and worship of God; but must attend upon them. They will exhort and stir up one another to love and good works. They will not only attend the worship of God themselves, but endeavour to bring others with them; saying, Come, let us go up to the house of the Lord; for he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths.

Those in whom this good thing is, will lay out themselves, their time, their talents, and, all they have and are, for the honour of God, and his cause

and interest. They will honour the Lord with their substance, and with the first fruits of their increase. Where there is some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel, there will be some good thing done for the honour of the Lord God of Israel.

This leads me to mention, Our yearly collection for the poor Ministers, and the Churches in the country. I persuade myself there is some good thing in many of you, and if so, there will be some good thing done by you: and I doubt not, but this will be attended unto, which is certainly a good work, as it serves greatly to promote the honour and interest of religion, and the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This is a work which you have been used to, and I need not take up much of your time to inform you of the nature of it. It has been continued in the churches in and about London, between forty and fifty years (This sermon was preached, September 1762). The fund was raised so long ago, by several churches, that united in the benevolent design. It is in some measure increased; and the interest of the stock and fund, together with the collections made by the several churches, are annually distributed for the relief of poor ministers and churches in England and Wales. A great number there are assisted and made more comfortable thereby. Pastors, whose churches are not able to give them a proper maintenance, but are obliged to work with their own hands, are, by your liberality a little eased; their families are a little better provided for, and the gospel a little oftener preached, than otherwise it would be, were it not for your generosity. An attention to this, therefore, must be a good thing, and I am satisfied of your readiness to assist in so good a work.

This business is managed by your deputies, who are annually chosen to see that the money is distributed to none but such as are sound Ministers of the Gospel: and you, yourselves, are in some measure witnesses that those persons are, as you now and then have an opportunity of hearing them. You hear what sound, savory, spiritual, and evangelical ministers they are. You are sometimes drawn thereby into admiration and thankfulness, that the churches in the country are so well supplied with ministers; surely then, this will excite such of you, in whose hearts there is some good thing, to do this good thing for the interest of your Redeemer. Many arguments might be made use of to engage you to this. It is, by the providence of God, so

ordered in the common course of things, that some have a larger share of the things of this world, and others are in a poorer state of life; that one may supply the other. So it is in the churches: there are some that have more in number, and among them, persons that are capable of handing forth for the relief of others: thus the churches in Macedonia relieved the poorer saints in Jerusalem: and so it should be with you. You have many mercies to be thankful for. Temporal mercies; the health of this city, and of the whole nation, is a mercy to be taken notice of. The plenty of provisions; the peace we have at home, and now we are upon the eve of a general peace, when your trade and commerce will be more enlarged, without fear from the enemy: but above all, the gospel of the grace of God, continued with you, and which is likely to be so by means of our gracious Sovereign upon the throne: These things should encourage us to do all we can to promote the interest of the Lord our God. It cannot be thought, indeed, that all of you should be sufficiently provided for this good work at this time, many of you having not heard of it before. For the sake, therefore, of such, this collection will be repeated next Lord's day, and then finished. It is to be hoped you will come with open hearts and open purses, and liberally contribute: and let none of you stay away upon this account. Come yourselves, and bring as many of your friends as you can with you: bring those who are now absent, whom you are acquainted with; bring your children, encourage your servants, and every one to do according to their ability; and thus make it manifest there is some good thing in you, by doing something for the honour of God, and the good of his cause.

18 The Manifestation Of Christ, As A Saviour To His People, A Cause Of Great Joy.

1 CHRONICLES 12:40.

For there was joy in Israel.

In this chapter we have an account of the association of great multitudes of the people of Israel unto David: first in his exile, when he was obliged to flee from Saul, and was persecuted by him from place to place. In different places, whither he was obliged to retire, many came unto him; as, at the cave of Adullam, in the hold in the wilderness, and at Ziklag. The names, numbers, and characters of those persons that gathered together to him at these several times and

places, are mentioned in the beginning of this chapter. In the latter part of it, we have an account of the tribes, that came to him at Hebron to make him King over all Israel; (1 Chron. 12:23). These are the numbers of the bands that were ready armed to the war, and came to David to Hebron, to turn the kingdom of Saul to him, according to the word of the Lord. All these men of war that could keep rank, came with a perfect heart to Hebron, to make David King over all Israel (1 Chron. 12:38). This was after he had reigned over Judah seven years and an half. Upon this, there was a feast made for this great company; and there they were with David three days, eating and drinking what David had provided for them. Those at Hebron, those of the tribe of Judah, with the assistance of others, brought bread, meat, meal, cakes of figs, bunches of raisins and wine and oil, with oxen and sheep abundantly: for the inhabitants of Hebron, and the tribe of Judah, were not sufficient to have regaled this great company. Then follow the words I have read; For there was joy in Israel. The civil war, between the house of Saul and that of David, was now ended. The man, who was the darling of the people; who was a wise prince and a successful general; who had the good of his country at heart; and from whose administration the people had raised expectations, being now, by divine appointment, made King over all the tribes, there was joy in Israel.

But great as that joy was, there is abundant reason for much greater in the spiritual Israel, on account of David's illustrious son, the King Messiah, the Saviour of his people; whom God hath set, as King, over his holy hill of Zion, and given intimations of his Kingly office in various prophecies of the Old Testament. For thus it is written: Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! shout, O Daughter of Jerusalem. Behold thy King cometh unto thee; he is just and having salvation (Zech. 9:9). It is also intimated in prophecy, what should be said upon this joyful occasion. This is our God, we have waited for him; and he will save us. This is the Lord, we have waited for him; we will be glad, and rejoice in his salvation (Isa. 25:9).

It is in this view of the words, that I shall endeavour a spiritual improvement of them, by showing,

I. The cause of joy in Israel, with relation to the King Messiah, the Son of David, our Lord Jesus Christ.

II. Where, and among whom, this joy is and will

be. And,

III. The nature of this joy: by which it may be judged, in some measure, whether it is pure and genuine, in those who profess to have it.

I. I shall consider the cause, the reason, the matter of this joy, as it relates to the King Messiah, the Son of David, our Lord Jesus Christ: and this with respect to every manifestation of him, as the King, the Saviour of Israel. First, in the Flesh; then in his coming to his people at conversion; and then in the latter day, both in his spiritual and personal reign. At each of these periods there has been, is, and will be great joy; and that more abundantly than when David was made King over all Israel.

1. His coming in the flesh is a matter of joy, as he then appeared King of Israel, and the Saviour thereof. He came as a King; not as a temporal, but as a spiritual one. The Jews expected him as a temporal King; and it is very probable the wise men of the East, had no other notion of him, when being led by the star, they came and inquired where he was, that was born King of the Jews. But though he was a King, as he confessed to Pilate, yet he was not a temporal monarch. His kingdom, as he told him plainly, was not of this world. His kingdom came not with external pomp and grandeur. He appeared, not as a temporal prince, with majesty and glory; but in the form of a servant. He came, not to be ministered unto, to be served and waited upon in a grand and pompous manner; but to minister; to be a servant, and to give his life a ransom for many. In short, his being King in Israel, is no other than being the Redeemer and Saviour of his people. For he came not to judge the world, to rule and govern it, in the manner as kings and princes do: but to save the world so that the work he wrought, as a Saviour, as the King of Israel, and deliverer of his people, was, truly speaking, the cause of joy. There was joy in Israel upon his appearance as the King of Israel.

Now, as such his business was, in general, to work out salvation; in particular to bring in an everlasting righteousness, and to make atonement for the sins of his people: all which lay a solid foundation for joy in the spiritual Israel, or among the people of God, who have any notion of these things. His great work was to procure salvation for his people: for that is the thing on account of which the church is called upon to rejoice at his coming. Rejoice greatly, O daughter of

Zion! for thy King cometh having salvation. Salvation! that is the thing which is the source, the foundation of spiritual joy in Israel: the salvation of the souls of men. Thus the apostle Peter stiles it; Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. Your Souls, which are so valuable and excellent, of more worth than the whole world: and by how much the soul is more excellent than the body, by so much the more great and excellent is the salvation of the one than the other: and, therefore, the greater reason for joy. If a corporal salvation lay a foundation for joy, as it often does; then much more the salvation of the soul; which is wrought out by Jesus Christ. This is an eternal salvation. God, as the God of nature and providence, is our King and our God, working salvation in the midst of the earth. He is the author of every deliverance therein, and on that account to be praised; and gladness appeals in those who are sharers therein. But the salvation that Christ, as our King, and our God, is the author of, or has wrought out for his spiritual Israel, is a spiritual and eternal salvation. Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation; and therefore justly occasions great rejoicing.

This is a salvation from sin, and from wrath to come, from eternal death, and from every spiritual enemy. It is a salvation from sin. Christ is called by the name of Jesus, because he saves his people from their sins. From the sin of their nature, or original sin; and all consequences of it from actual transgression; sins of heart, lip, and life of omission and commission, greater, and lesser sins. Christ saves from them all. It was foretold of him that he should redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

The salvation wrought out, is a salvation from wrath to come, which sin is deserving of; on account of which it is revealed from heaven, and comes upon the children of disobedience; and every sinner may expect it. Christ saves his people from wrath to come. Being justified by his blood and righteousness, they are saved from wrath through him. In short, they are saved from hell, death, and every enemy whatever; and therefore, there is great reason for joy in Israel.

This work of salvation is what his divine Father called him to, and gave into his hands. I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do: he means the work of salvation. God sent him in the fullness of time, to be the Saviour of men. He came into this world, to

seek and to save them that were lost: lost in Adam, even in his fall. He is become the author of eternal salvation. He has obtained eternal redemption for his people, and that by himself, without the assistance of any creature, angel, or man. His own arm hath wrought salvation. It is a complete work.

Now it is matter of great joy in Israel, that Christ is come as a King and a Saviour; and hath wrought out salvation; And the rather, in as much as this salvation is for sinners; and for the chief of sinners. It is for sinners; and indeed, none else could stand in need of it; nor do any but sensible sinners see their need of it. The whole need not a physician, a Saviour, but they that are sick. Christ came not to call the righteous, self-righteous persons, that imagine their own righteousness will be sufficient to justify them: he came not to call these, but sinners to repentance. This salvation is for the chief of sinners. If it were for sinners of such and such a size only, whose lives were not tarnished with any notorious crime; or who had lived very regular lives, and had committed only some few faults that are common to all mankind: had this been the case, Saul the persecutor, the blasphemer, the injurious person, would have had no part in this matter: but it was the foundation of his faith, hope, and joy, that this is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. The Corinthians, of whom the apostle says, such were some of you (having given a list of the vilest sinners that ever lived), would not have been washed, sanctified, and justified, had Christ wrought out salvation for sinners only of such or such a size: but it is for the worst and vilest of sinners, that this salvation is wrought out.

It is to be had freely; and that is another cause of joy in Israel. Salvation is by the free grace of God, not by works. If it were only for persons so and so disposed: so and so qualified; or who had done such and such works of righteousness; there would be great reason for despondency in the minds of many persons: but it is not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us. Not of works, lest any man should boast. Salvation, and the blessings of it, may be had freely. For though our Lord exhorts persons to come and buy of him gold tried in the fire, and white raiment, expressive of grace and the blessings of it; they are to be bought without money,

and without price.

The salvation that Christ hath wrought out, as King, which occasions joy in Israel, is a great salvation; it cannot be said how great it is. Eternity itself is not enough to set forth the greatness thereof. How then shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? Salvation wrought out by the great God; a salvation wrought out for great sinners, obtained at a great expense, even the precious blood of Jesus: for we are bought or redeemed, not with corruptible things, as silver and gold: but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. A salvation expressive of the greatest love; of the love of the Father, in giving his Son: and of the Son in giving himself; and it is hard to say, which is the greatest. A salvation complete. A salvation of the whole man, soul and body. A salvation from every sin, and from every spiritual enemy. A salvation to the utmost; a salvation that secures grace here, and glory hereafter; and on account of which, those who share in it, are said to be complete in Christ.

This is a salvation in which the glory of God is greatly concerned, as well as the interest of his people secured. The glory of all the divine perfections are secured in this salvation. Mercy and truth here meet together; righteousness and peace kiss each other. The angels saw this, and praised the Lord at Christ's incarnation: they sung, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men.

On account of this great salvation, wrought out by the King of Israel, when he appeared in our world, there was joy in Israel, and good reason for it. A particular branch of his work, as King of Israel, was the working out an everlasting righteousness for his people. When he is prophesied of as the King of Israel, that should appear in the fulness of time, he is spoken of under this character; The Lord our Righteousness. It is said, the Lord will raise up to David a righteous Branch; and a King shall reign and prosper. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is the name, whereby this King, this righteous Branch, shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness (Jer. 23:5, 6). He is the author of righteousness, and his work was to bring in everlasting righteousness. He came into this world to fulfil all righteousness: not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it. He is the fulfilling end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes: and this

causes joy. Hence says the church, I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with a robe of righteousness (Isa. 61:10). In the like exulting strain does she express herself in another place, Surely in the Lord have I righteousness; and in the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory (Isa. 45:24, 25): make their boast, rejoice, and be glad, that they have a righteousness in Christ, and are justified by it. This righteousness is truly called in Scripture, the righteousness of God; because he that wrought it is God as well as man. Hence the apostle, speaking of the gospel, says, Herein is the righteousness of God revealed, from faith to faith. And again, The righteousness of God is unto all, and upon all them that believe. A righteousness it is which God the Father approves, and is well pleased with; because quite agreeable to his law, and to his justice. He therefore imputes it freely to his people, without works. This righteousness is entirely agreeable to the law of God, and answerable to all its demands: for though its commands are exceeding broad, this righteousness is of equal extent. The law indeed is said to be magnified by it, and made honourable: more honourable than it could have been by the most perfect obedience of angels, or of men. It is a righteousness with which the justice of God can find no fault; but is entirely satisfied with. Those that are justified by it are without fault, even before the throne of God, as the Judge of all the earth: for, by this righteousness, they are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses: they are acquitted from all sins. Those whom God clothes with change of raiment, or with his righteousness; he causes all their iniquities to pass away. They are without spot and blemish; and hence they are accepted with God, through his righteousness. They are comely, through that comeliness put upon them. This is matter of joy; and the rather, because this righteousness is to be had freely. Those whom God justifies by it, are in themselves ungodly. He imputes righteousness to them without works; without any consideration of any works of theirs. It is a gift which they receive of him; and proceeds from the abundance of grace. It is by faith that this gift is received; even righteousness from the God of our salvation. The grace of faith, by which a soul receives this righteousness from the Lord, is also

the gift of God. In virtue of this righteousness being imputed, and applied to the soul by faith, it enjoys much solid peace and comfort. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God. The effect of this righteousness is peace, quietness, and assurance for ever. These are not the effects of a man's own righteousness, or of works done by himself; for they yield no satisfaction, when he reflects upon the impurity of them, and upon the imperfection that is in them: but the righteousness of Christ lays a solid foundation for peace. Hence the kingdom of God is said to consist not in meat and drink, but in righteousness and peace: first righteousness, then peace. The righteousness of Christ imputed and applied: then solid peace and comfort. This righteousness entitles to eternal life; and it is only the righteousness of Christ that can give this title. The justification therefore that arises from it, is called the justification of life. Now all these, and many other things, that might he said of this work of righteousness which Christ hath wrought, lay a solid foundation for joy in Israel.

We may observe, before we conclude this head, that the work of Christ, as our King and Saviour, was to make atonement for sin; to finish transgression, make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness. He came into our world, in our nature, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. God set him forth in predictions, and sent him forth in the fulness of time to be a propitiatory sacrifice for sin. Propitiation is made by him and believers, by faith receive it. This causes joy in Israel; for we joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the atonement: received it in our hearts, and so feel great joy on that account: and there is great reason for it; since Christ hath done that which the blood of millions of slain beasts could not do: namely, take away sin, or make atonement for it. This he hath done by the sacrifice of himself: he, by one offering, hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. This sacrifice is of a sweet smelling savor to God; and therefore must occasion joy in Israel. It is the work of Christ manifest in the flesh, that is the cause of great joy in Israel.

2. The spiritual coming of Christ in the hearts of his people at conversion, is another event, that causes joy in Israel. In conversion he breaks open the everlasting doors of their hearts, and enters

in as the King of glory; sets up his throne; forms a governing principle in the soul, which reigns, through righteousness, unto eternal life by him. This occasions great joy. When Christ is revealed as a Redeemer and Saviour; when he is made manifest in the hearts of his people, as the hope of glory; it occasions joy to a poor sensible sinner, who before thought himself just ready to perish; having scarce any hope at all of being saved; there being nothing but a fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation to consume him, justly, because of his sins. Now to have Christ revealed to him as a Saviour, to have hopes of pardoning mercy, and of a perfect righteousness through him; what joy must this create in his soul? as in the first followers of our Lord; who, when they had found him, cried out with an ecstasy of joy, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write. So Nathaniel speaks of him, in a rapture, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel! that is, the Redeemer and Saviour of men. Thus it was with Zaccheus, when the Lord called him by name, and bid him come down: it is said, he came down, and received him joyfully. Thus it was with the three thousand, who cried out, Men and brethren, what shall we do? What will become of us? Is there any hope? An intimation being given that there was pardon through the blood of Christ, they gladly received the word. And thus it is with every sensible sinner, into whose heart Christ comes: there is great joy on that account.

Similar joy is also experienced by the saints, in the manifestations of divine favor after desertion. When Christ has withdrawn himself from his people, when they do not enjoy that communion with him as they used to have; when, they seek him earnestly, in this and the other ordinance, and at last find him; then they adopt the church's words in the Song of Solomon, I held him and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me: all which is expressive of the joy of a sinner on finding the Beloved. Thus it was with the disciples of our Lord, when he had been absent from them; of whom it is said, Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. And every true believer is so, after a time of darkness and desertion, when he is visited again with his sensible presence: for Christ is his all. None in heaven or upon earth like him; and he stands in every endearing relation to his people; and

he never pays them a visit, but he brings something along with him, which occasions joy. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come unto you. Whenever he comes he always brings something with him, which renders him welcome unto them. But,

3. In the latter day, when Christ will be more manifest, and, like David, will be King over all the house of Israel, and over the whole world; then there will be joy and gladness. In the spiritual reign of Christ it will be so, The four and twenty elders; that is, the ministers of the gospel church will fall down, and give thanks to him that sits upon the throne; because he has taken to himself his great power, and reigns. There will be joy in Israel, when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; when he will destroy Antichrist, with the breath of his mouth, and with the brightness of his coming. Then prophets, evangelists, and all the saints will be called upon to rejoice and be glad, because God hath shewed his justice in taking vengeance on Antichrist, and the Antichristian states. Read the first and sixth verses of the nineteenth chapter of the Revelation, and you will see what joy there will be in Israel on that account. There will be joy in Israel, when the Jews shall be converted; when the Lord's ancient bride, the church, shall be ready, and there will be a grant for her to be clothed with fine linen, clean and white, and then will be the marriage of the Lamb: when Gentiles, in all parts of the earth, will be converted, and called upon to rejoice. Great joy there will be in Israel, in his spiritual reign when there will be so much increasing light in the world: yea, when the whole earth will be enlightened with the glory of the uncreated Angel of God's presence; when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea; when the watchmen, and all the saints, shall see eye to eye, in a wonderful manner; when there shall be peace and harmony among the people of God, Ephraim shall no more vex Judah, nor Judah vex Ephraim: when brotherly love, according to the name of the Philadelphian church state, shall take place; when holiness shall be common among all that name the name of Christ; when the kingdom of Christ shall be enlarged from sea to sea, and from the rivers to the ends of the earth; when he will be King over all the earth; and when there shall be One Lord, and his name one.

Was there great joy in Israel, because David was made King over all the tribes of Israel? much greater will the joy be, when Christ shall be King over all the earth and much more when he shall appear, personally, without sin. unto salvation; when there shall be a new heaven and a new earth; and when Christ shall take up his residence among his people when there will be no more sorrow, no more pain, and all tears wiped away from their eyes. There shall be great joy in Israel, when Christ shall reign before his ancients in Jerusalem gloriously; and they also with him, in glory; which state will issue in ultimate happiness. Then those who are made Kings and Priests unto God shall be in his presence, where is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore. We must now inquire,

II. Where, and among whom, is this joy? In Israel. This, in a spiritual sense, we must understand, not of the people of the Jews only, who were of the natural stock of Israel; but of the Gentiles also, that are of the spiritual Israel of God. There was joy among them, on account of Christ's appearance in human nature as King of Israel: for his incarnation was not only on account of the Jews, or his people among them; but of the Gentiles also. Therefore, the angels that brought the news, declared, they brought good tidings of great joy to all people (Luke 2:10, 11).

The death of Christ was not for the Jews only, or for the Lord's people among them; no, not for that nation only, but to gather together the children of God that were scattered abroad: Christ became the propitiation, not only for the sins of the Jews (as John says), but for the sins of the whole world; that is, for all the elect of God, without difference. So there is joy in Israel, not among the Jews only, but among the Gentiles also, the whole Israel of God. This is especially the case with every true Israelite, when Christ is revealed in him, the hope of glory; for it is an ingredient in the character of a true believer: We are, says the apostle, the circumcision who worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

Among these Christ reigns, as King. He is set as King, upon the holy hill of Zion. There he is acknowledged as King. The church says, The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King, he will save us. These rejoiced in him, as their King; agreeable to

that command, Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King (Ps. 149:2). Here the gospel is preached, glad tidings of peace and salvation by Jesus Christ, which occasions joy in Israel. Here the ordinances are administered; which, to those that believe, are means of joy and gladness. This may be said of Baptism; and the ordinance of the Supper is a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees well refined (Isa. 25:6). There was a great feast on account of David's being made King over all the tribes; and this occasioned joy in Israel. But we have a greater feast than that, which the Lord hath prepared for his people in Sion; and it is the cause of greater joy. Here is a feast of fat things for his people to feed upon, in commemoration of what the King of Israel, the Saviour, has wrought for them.

There will be joy in Israel in the latter day, both in the spiritual and personal reign of Christ. There will be great joy, when there shall be but one fold, and one Shepherd: when David's son and Antitype, the King Messiah, shall rule over all the elect. Then they will be called upon to rejoice; as it is written, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.

III. I shall now say something of the nature of this joy in Israel, on account of these things: but here I shall be very brief. This joy is not carnal, or concerning carnal things: it is of a spiritual nature, and comes from the Spirit of God. It is called the joy of our Lord; from its accompanying faith in Christ. Where there is faith, there is, more or less, joy, and as faith increases, so will joy; and therefore it is called, the joy of faith. Hence the apostle prays, that the Romans might be filled with joy and peace in believing; believing in him, as their atoning sacrifice, and their justifying righteousness. Joy comes through believing; and it is only believers in Christ, that have any real experience of this spiritual joy. It is a joy that the world knows nothing of; a stranger intermeddles not with it: one that is a stranger to God, to Christ, and salvation by him, knows nothing at all of this joy. It is a joy that is unspeakable, and full of glory; that is better experienced than expressed; and sometimes it is so great that it cannot be told. As there is a sorrow in the saints, which is only expressed by sighs and groans, and cannot well be uttered; so there is a joy they cannot well express. It is well said to be unspeakable, and full of glory. Believers rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

It is a joy to be constantly exercised. Rejoice evermore, is an exhortation of the apostle. Rejoice in the Lord always, and again, I say, rejoice. There is always reason for rejoicing in the spiritual Israel, let their case and circumstances be what they may; as the prophet says, Although the fig-tree shall not blossom; neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herds in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. Let the circumstances of believers be what they may, there is always occasion for joy. It is true, indeed, this joy may be, and often is interrupted: partly through the corruptions of nature; partly through the temptations of Satan; and partly through divine desertions; thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled. But, then, it may be again revived, and increased: according to that promise, The meek shall increase their joy in the Lord; and the poor among men shall rejoice in the holy One of Israel (Isa. 29:16). Increase it may, partly by means of the word and ordinances but chiefly through fresh manifestations of interest in Christ, and the shedding abroad of his love in the heart.

This joy will be, at last, full and complete. In the heavenly state, the true Israelites will be called to enter into the joy of their Lord; and will be introduced into his presence, where there is fullness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

Let us now consider what experience we have had of this spiritual joy. What sort of a joy is ours? Is it of this kind? Is it such as is attended with faith in Christ, which springs from a view of his work, what he hath done for us, his having wrought out salvation, brought in a righteousness, and made an atonement for our sins by his blood? Is it founded upon these things, or is it not? If we are partakers of this sort of joy, let it be our great concern to hold fast the rejoicing of our hope firm unto the end. It is pleasing in the sight of God, that we should be joyful, and express our gladness unto him. It should be our great concern to have this joy increased; and, that it may be so, let us make use of all the means which God hath appointed for the increase thereof.

Him, The Support Of A Believer In Life And In Death.

A Discourse occasioned by the Death of Mr. Joshua Hayes.

2 TIMOTHY 1:12

I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

THE occasion of my reading these words, at this time is the decease of Mr. Joshua Hayes, late member of this church of Christ: who frequently made use of them, and expressed his faith in a living Redeemer by them. It was therefore thought, by his friends, that they would be very suitable for the subject of a Funeral Discourse; in compliance with whose request, I have read them unto you.

In the 9th and 10th verses of this chapter, we have the sum and substance of the everlasting gospel; which lies in salvation by the free grace of God (in distinction from the works of men), according to the eternal purpose of God, and the wise scheme of things formed in the divine mind from everlasting: where it was a secret and hidden thing, but now made manifest by the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ in our nature; who by his obedience, sufferings, and death, hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. All this you will see in the verses I have referred to, which run thus: Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began; but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath brought life and immortality to light, through the gospel. Which exactly agrees with what the apostle elsewhere affirms, that we are saved by grace not by works, lest any man should boast. (Eph. 2:9) And that these, who are the chosen of God are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ Jesus; according as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world. (Eph. 1:3, 4) Christ incarnate is become the high Priest of these great things laid up in the everlasting purpose, covenant, and promise of God: and has abolished death, even corporal death, as a penal evil, and destroyed the second death, so that it shall have no power over those whom he has redeemed

by his precious blood and by his obedience, sufferings and death, hath opened a way for them to enjoy eternal life. He came that we might have life, and that we might have it more abundantly. (John 10:10) This is a compendium of the grace of the gospel; of that gospel, of which the apostle says he was appointed a preacher. And a gospel preacher indeed he was. Never was the gospel more freely, fully, faithfully, and powerfully or constantly preached, than it was by him. He was appointed to this work from all eternity. He was a chosen vessel of salvation (as the Lord himself says) to bear his name among the Gentiles. (Acts 9:15) He was also appointed by a gospel church at Antioch: for, said the Spirit of God in the prophets there, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. (Acts 13:12) He was an apostle of Jesus Christ, and had all the signs of apostleship in him. An apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus C/inst: (Gal. 1:1) sent forth, commissioned and qualified by him for the important work of preaching the everlasting gospel. And particularly he was, as he said, a teacher of the Gentiles: for though all the apostles and ministers of the word were included in the same commission, and commanded to go into all nations, teaching and baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; yet our apostle had a special and particular commission to preach the gospel among the Gentiles. As the gospel of the circumcision was committed to Peter (for he was the person more particularly pitched upon to preach the gospel to the circumcised Jews), so Paul was particularly pitched upon to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, And it is not easy to say, to how many nations he was sent, and among whom he preached the gospel, and among whom he was made successful in founding and raising churches for the honour and glory of God.

Now, on the account of this his office, and the faithful execution of it, he met with much persecution. For the which cause (says he), I also suffer these things; (2 Tim. 1:12) for he was at this time a prisoner at Rome. Again, he says, I suffer trouble as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound. Therefore I endure all things for the elects' sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory. And this was no other than what he

always expected wherever he came. He knew, from the nature of things, and from divine appointment, that bonds and afflictions awaited him wherever he went; and he cheerfully endured them for the good of souls, and the glory of the divine name. For the which cause, I also suffer these things, verse 12, that is, for being a preacher of the gospel, an apostle of Christ. He was hated by Jews and Gentiles on this account: of the Jews, partly because he preached the gospel, and partly because he preached it to the Gentiles, that they might he saved; than which nothing more provoking to them. Hated by the Gentiles, because they thought he introduced a new religion among them, and that he was a setter up of strange Gods, because he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection; (Acts 17:18) because his ministry tended to the demolishing of idolatry and superstition amongst them. Wherefore he was hated by them, and endured the things he did; to all which he was appointed, as well as to be a preacher of the gospel. Nevertheless, (he adds) I am not ashamed. Not ashamed of the sufferings I endure in a righteous cause: not ashamed of the gospel, for which I suffer these things, which is the power of God unto salvation. Nor am I ashamed of Christ, the sum and substance of this gospel; not ashamed of my faith in him, nor of my hope of eternal life and salvation by him; for hope makes not ashamed. (Rom. 5:5) Now the ground of all this, lies in the words I have read: For I know whom I have believed; and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, against that day. This was the foundation of the apostle's joy and comfort, of the satisfaction of soul, and serenity of mind, which he enjoyed amidst all the sufferings he endured for the sake of the gospel. He had believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. He knew the object in whom he had believed. He knew him at first conversion; and had, throughout the whole of his ministrations, committed his natural life, and the preservation of it, into the hands of a good God, and a blessed Redeemer. He was therefore easy, come what would. Whatever suffering he endured, he knew all was safe. I know whom I have believed. I know he will never leave me, nor forsake me; he will preserve and bring me safe to his everlasting kingdom and glory, where I shall enjoy the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day.

(2 Tim. 4:8)

And that which was the ground and support of [bin], under all his trials and exercises, may be, and often is, the support of the people of God under all their trials and exercises; or what gives them relief under their present troubles, and in the view of an eternal world, This will better appear, and we shall have a clearer understanding thereof, by enquiring into, and observing the following things.

I. Who the object of the apostle's faith was, or who it was he believed and trusted his all with I know whom I have believed, or trusted.

II. The knowledge he had of this object of Faith whom he believed and trusted. I know, &c.

IN. The persuasion he had of the ability of this person he had believed in, to keep what he had committed to him against a certain day.

IV. The support this was to him in his present circumstances, and in the view of death and eternity, which he saw was near at hand; for he says in a following passage, I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. (2 Tim. 4:6)

I. Let us consider who it was that was the object of the apostle's faith, and is the object of the faith of every true believer. Now this can be no other than our Lord Jesus Christ. How often do we hear him speak of his faith in our Lord Jesus Christ! This was the constant course of his spiritual life. This he assures us himself. I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. (Gal. 2:20) From hence it is clear, that the object he believed in, or trusted, was the Son of God: the Messiah: the Lord Jesus Christ.

And he is the object of every true believer's faith, and ought to be so. Our Lord himself directs unto it when he says to his disciples, Ye believe in God, believe also in me. (John 14:1) There is the same reason to believe in Christ as in God the Father because he is equally God with him; so is as proper an object of faith as the first person in the blessed Trinity. And it is unto him that souls, made sensible of their lost state and condition by nature, are encouraged to look, to believe in, and exercise faith upon, as you will observe in the instance of the Jailor. When he came in trembling and

said, "Sirs, what shall I do to be saved?" they answer at once, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. (Acts 14:31)

Christ is the object of a sensible sinner's trust: the object of a true believer's faith in the business of salvation. But then let us enquire a little into the nature of this faith he exercises upon Him. It is not to be considered as a mere historical faith: a bare assent to a set of propositions concerning Christ, his person, offices, and the like; no, the devils have a faith; they have a creed, and in many respects a more orthodox one too than some that call themselves Christians. The devils believe that there is a God, and that there is one God; though they tremble at it. They know and believe, that Jesus Christ is the Holy One of God; yea, that he is the Son of God, and that he is the Christ, the Anointed of the Lord, sent into the world to be time Saviour of men. All this they believe, and a great deal more that they are obliged to believe, and cannot help it, concerning the Son of God; but this is not the faith of God's Elect. There are some weak people in our days that talk of a bare belief of the simple truth, and call this, faith in Christ Jesus; but it falls greatly short of it. For a man may have all faith of this kind, may believe every thing that is proposed and revealed in the word of God, and yet not have that faith which is of the operation of God.

Special faith is a spiritual thing. It is a spiritual sight of Christ. Yea, faith is the eye of the soul, the enlightened eye of the soul opened by the Spirit of God, to see the glory, the excellency, there is in our Lord Jesus Christ: to see his glory as the glory of the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth to see him as the able, willing, all-sufficient, and most suitable Saviour. Faith is said to be the evidence of things not seen. It has a sight of unseen things, as of the unseen Saviour; and in its continual and constant actings is a looking unto Jesus. Looking off from every other object (a man's own righteousness, and every thing else) unto Jesus Christ the Lord our righteousness, as the living Redeemer, the only and all-sufficient Saviour. It is no other than a soul's going out of itself to Christ, to lay hold upon him, and trust in him for everlasting life and happiness. Expressed often by a coming to him, influenced by his Spirit and grace, and the declarations of grace he makes, saying, Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy

laden, and I will give rest. (Matt. 11:28) And all that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. (John 6:37) A poor sinner, sensible of his wretched lost state by nature, and of what he deserves, is encouraged to go out of himself to lay hold on Christ, who is the tree of life to them that lay hold upon him. It is, I say, a going forth and laying hold of Christ, under a sight of sin and a sense of danger, of ruin and destruction without him.

Some people in our days talk of faith as a very easy thing—only believe—only believe, say they; but it is to be feared these persons that talk in this manner, and make such an easy thing of believing in Christ, never saw their lost state by nature, the sinfulness of sin, and the ruin and destruction that it brings: never saw themselves upon the precipice of hell, dropping as it were into everlasting damnation. Let a person be in these circumstances, and then let him tell me, whether it is an easy thing for him to believe in Christ for life and salvation: and yet this is done, and herein lies the trial of faith. This shews the genuineness of it, when a soul under a sense of all its iniquities, with all their aggravating circumstances, demerits and deserts, can venture his soul upon Christ. Give me this man. It is he that knows what it is to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. But he finds a great many discouragements, doubts, and fears; a thousand objections before he can do this. He does not find it a very easy thing: it is a work of almighty power and efficacious grace.

It was under such a sense of sin as I have mentioned, that the apostle trusted in Christ; and he considers that grace as exceeding abundant which communicated faith and love to his soul who had been before a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious. 1 Timothy 1:13, 14. And his faith arose to a full assurance, as the words of our text expresses; and elsewhere he says, The life I live in the flesh is by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. (Gal. 2:20) He had a firm belief of interest in Christ: an assurance of faith in Christ. And it is what the Lord is pleased to grant unto some of his children that have not that share of grace and gifts as that great man had; Let us (he says) draw near with a true heart. (Heb. 10:22) He does not mean himself only, and his fellow apostles, or men of the highest gifts and character in the church; but the children of God in general; believers in common: Let

OF A BELIEVER IN LIFE AND IN DEATH.

us, all of us, draw near to God with a true heart, in a full assurance of faith. In full assurance of the object of faith prayed unto; that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. In full assurance of having those petitions put up unto him that are agreeable to his will answered; in full assurance of a Mediator between God and man, and of an interest in his prevailing mediation and intercession; "Let us draw near with true hearts in full assurance of faith," by the blood of Jesus. For that is the ground and foundation of all assurance: even the precious blood of Jesus, shed for many for the remission of sins.

Now this faith, whether in a higher or in a lower degree, as to the principle of it, is of God. It is not of a man's self; no, it is by the grace of God, and the power of God, that it is wrought. All men have not faith : (2 Thess. 3:2) no, far from it. The greater part appear to have none, no true faith; and it is to be feared, that many that talk of it, are destitute of it, and know not what the thing is. And they that have it, have it not of themselves: By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. (Eph. 2:8) Hence our Lord says, No man can come unto me, (that is, believe in me) except it be given unto him of my Father. (John 6:65) Special faith is a gift of God's grace; and it is of the operation of the Spirit of God in the soul. He works it there. It is he that gives this spiritual eye, the eye of faith; which communicates light to the understanding, and enables the soul to go out of itself to Christ, and venture upon him for life and salvation. It is the fruit and effect of electing grace; and therefore it is sometimes called the faith of God's elect. (Titus 1:1) It is an exceeding precious grace in all, it is like precious faith; (2 Peter 1:1) for those that have the least degree of it, obtain the same precious faith as the greatest and strongest believer. It is precious faith, it can never be lost; it is more precious than gold which perisheth. Gold is a very durable metal, but it perishes; but faith never does. Christ, who is the object and the author of it, he is the finisher of it; and he prays for his people, as he did for Peter, that their faith fail not. That same Spirit of grace that works faith in the soul, performs the work of faith with power upon the soul. Those that truly believe in Christ, shall most certainly receive the end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls. So much for the first thing, the object of faith; and the exercise of faith upon the object. I know

whom I have believed.

II. I am to consider the knowledge the apostle had of the object of his faith; and which every true believer also has. I know whom I have believed.

Faith in Christ, is not a blind and implicit thing, a faith in an object unknown; no, it is in a known object. Faith and knowledge go together! where the one is, the other is also. Though there may be, and is, faith in an unseen Christ, that is, who is not seen with the bodily eyes; whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory: (1 Peter 1:8) yet an unknown Christ can never be the object of faith. He must be known, or he can never be believed in. Our Lord said to the blind man, whom he had cured, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? (John 9:35) The poor man made answer, and very wisely, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? Suggesting, that he must know him, before he could believe in him. He knew there was such a person as the Messiah, that was to come into the world as the Saviour of Sinners; but as yet he did not know him, and therefore says, Who is he?

There is an external knowledge and hearing that is necessary, even to a bare assent; before any can know or believe in him; For how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? (Rom. 10:14) so there is a special knowledge necessary to special faith. And as a man's knowledge is, so is his faith: if he has only an historical knowledge of Christ, he has only an historical faith: if he has a special knowledge of Christ, he has a special faith. And as his knowledge increases, so does his faith, They that know the Lord, follow on to know him; and as they know more of him, faith grows stronger and stronger in him. They that know thy name, will put their trust in thee. (Ps. 9:10) And the more a soul knows of Christ, the more will he trust him; the stronger will his faith be in him. As it is among men, the more we know a man, a friend, the greater confidence we put in him; so the more we know of Christ, and of God in Christ, the stronger will our faith be in him. But then, this knowledge is not to be understood of a speculative knowledge: it is not a mere notional knowledge of Christ, of his person, his nature, and his offices: or, as he is revealed in the sacred Scriptures, as the Saviour of men; it is a more spiritual knowledge than this. Men may have a great

deal of knowledge of Christ, and of things relative to him, and yet have no spiritual knowledge. They may have that kind of knowledge that may enable them to preach him to others, and plead in the great day, "Have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils: and in thy name done many wonderful works?" (Matt. 7:22) To whom Christ will say, "Depart from me, I never knew you." And therefore you may depend upon it, they never knew him, notwithstanding all the knowledge they may pretend to have had; or otherwise, he would not thus address them. Spiritual knowledge of Christ is joined with spiritual affection to him. It is a knowledge of approbation: a knowledge of his person, as the chiefest among ten thousand. It is a knowledge of Christ is a Saviour, altogether suitable and all sufficient; and which determines a soul at once to look to no other but him, and to say, He also shall be my salvation. (Job 13:26) He first knows him, then believes in him, and commits his all unto him. And this is an experimental knowledge of Christ, which is expressed by the various senses; for there is that in the new man which answers to all the senses of the outward man, It is a seeing the Son, and believing on him; (John 6:40) It is a hearing his voice, so as to distinguish it from that of a stranger. (John 10:4, 5) It is a tasting that the Lord is gracious. (1 Peter 2:3) A handling the word of life; (1 John 1:1) and a savoring the things of God, and not of man; smelling a sweet smell in Christ's garments, which smell was of myrrh, aloes, and cassia. (Ps. 45:8) These expressions set forth the exercise of faith in Christ, on a true knowledge of him, and show that knowledge to be not merely notional, but really experimental.

This is also an appropriating knowledge, more or less; a soul that thus knows Christ, is able to appropriate him, in a measure, to himself, and sometimes arrives to such a confidence as to point him out, and say with the church, This is my beloved, and this is my friend. (Song 5:16) And with Thomas, My Lord and my God! (John 20:28) and with the apostle, Who loved me, and gave himself for me. (Gal. 2:20) The nature of the expression in the text is such, as when the apostle says, We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God: (2 Cor. 5:1) that is, we are assured of it; it is not a mere conjectural knowledge, but a thing we are quite satisfied about. So

Job expresses his faith in a living Redeemer, in such language, I know that my Redeemer liveth. (Job 19:25) He not only knew there was a Redeemer, and that he would appear upon the earth another day; but he knew him to be his, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Every degree of knowledge has something of certainty in it, or else it would be skepticism, a mere conjectural knowledge; but this is not the case with the knowledge of true believers, they can say with the apostles, We believe, and are sure, that thou art Christ, the Son of the living God. (John 6:69)

This knowledge, though it is imperfect in the present state, yet it is a growing knowledge. There is such a thing as growing in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ, by means of the ministration of the word, and the administration of the ordinances. The path of the just is as the shining light, which shines more and more unto the perfect day. Every degree of this spiritual knowledge of Christ has salvation inseparably connected with it, For this is life eternal, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. (John 17:3) And therefore it must be the most excellent of all knowledge, which made the apostle say, I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. (Phil. 3:8) What signifies what a man knows, if he don't know Christ crucified: and the way of life and salvation by him? All his knowledge in things natural, civil, or even in religious matters, is of no avail. What if his eyes are opened as Balaam's were, who saw the vision of the Almighty, and who said, he should see him (the Saviour) but not nigh? What signified all the prophetic knowledge and light he had, while he was destitute of a spiritual knowledge of Christ? Nothing short of this will be of any avail: and if a man has but this, it is enough.—If he has but the smallest degree of it, he shall be saved; for every one which seeth the Son (it is not said, whoever has such and such a degree of spiritual sight) and believeth on him (even though his faith be but small) shall have everlasting life. (John 6:40)

Now this spiritual knowledge comes from God, as faith does; it comes from God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. All the three Divine Persons are concerned in communicating this spiritual light and knowledge. The Father. To him our Lord ascribes it, when he says

to Peter, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood, (carnal sense and reason) hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father, which is in heaven. (Matt. 16:17) Sometimes it is attributed to God the Son, We know (says the apostle John) that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son, Jesus Christ. (John 5:20) And sometimes to the blessed Spirit, who is styled a Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ. (Eph. 1:17) And it is a special gift of God's grace, and for which we should be thankful who have any share in it.

III. We may observe the firm persuasion the apostle had of the ability of the person he had believed in, to keep what he had committed unto him against a certain day.

We will here enquire what he committed to him. Not his labors and sufferings, expecting they would hereafter be brought forth to his advantage. They were, indeed, great: but they were performed by the grace of, and through strength communicated from God. As for his sufferings, they were many indeed, more than others of his fellow-laborers in the gospel; but then he knew that the sufferings of this present life, were not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed in him.

Rather he may mean the souls of the persons he had been instrumental in the conversion of; and we find him sometimes commending such persons to God and to the word of his grace. (Acts 20:32) These he committed to Christ, and believed that he would keep them, and that he should meet them as his joy and crown of rejoicing in another day: or it may be interpreted, of his natural life which he had committed unto the hands of his Redeemer, who he knew would take care of it, who told him, at first setting out, not to be afraid. And he had experienced many a time, that he had saved it when in imminent danger: though it seems best of all to understand it of his precious and immortal soul, and the everlasting concerns thereof. This he committed to his dear Redeemer at first conversion, when he first knew him, and he knew he was able to keep it safe against the day here referred to. So every true believer does the like; commits and commends his immortal soul into the hands of his

Redeemer, and there he leaves it.

This Let of committing it to Christ, supposes knowledge. No man that is wise, will commit any thing or worth into the hands of one unknown to him; and much less will any commit his immortal soul into the hands of one unknown. No, he must know him, they that know thy name, will put their trust in thee; (Ps. 9:10) and it implies the giving the preference to Christ, above all others. We may consider the apostle as looking about among all the sons of the mighty upon earth, and angels in heaven, to see whether any of those were fit to commit his soul unto, and finding none of them were, he says, Whom have I in heavens but thee? and there is none upon earth, that I desire beside thee. He saw on insufficiency in all others; that they were unequal to the task of saving his soul; that salvation was not to be hoped for from the mountains; that truly in the Lord, and in him only, was salvation to be found. Such a view have all true believers, and therefore say they, Ashur shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses; neither will we say any more to the works of our hands, ye are our Gods ;for is thee the fatherless find mercy. (Hosea 14:3) Each of them addresses Christ, as Ahab did Benhadad, I am thine, and all that I have. (1 Kings 20:4) "I give up my soul, and all that I have, to be saved in thee, with an everlasting salvation." It denotes trusting in Christ for grace here, and glory hereafter: leaving all with him, believing that he is able to save to the uttermost, all that come unto God by him.

As to the day here referred to, this may be understood of the day of death. Death is appointed by the Lord, to every man; (Heb. 9:27) and against this day, the apostle committed, and so every true believer commits, his soul into the hands of Christ, when he hopes to meet with the Lord, and to be for ever with him, out of all danger from every enemy. Or it may be understood of the day of the resurrection. The first resurrection. The dead in Christ shall rise first, and happy will they be; for on them the second death shall have no power, and they shall be for ever with the Lord. Or it may be understood of the day of judgment, in which they must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, in which he will make an open acknowledgment of them, and say, "These persons are the gift of my Father unto me: I have redeemed

them with my blood; and by my grace they have been enabled to commit themselves into my hand: lo! here am I, and the children which God hath given me,”

The ground and foundation of this trust in Christ, arises from his proper Deity. He being God over all, blessed for evermore, it is this that encourages a soul at first, and that from the declaration Christ himself has given, Look unto me, and he ye saved, all ye ends of the earth; for I am GOD, and there is none else. (Isa. 45:22) His being the former and the maker of all things, forming all things by the word of his power, is another argument. “He whose hands laid the foundation of the earth, and whose right hand hath spanned the heavens,” may well be considered as able to keep the soul which is committed to him against that day. His having already performed the work his Father gave him to do, is another foundation from whence this trust and confidence in him arises. He came, and his own arm has brought salvation. The work is done. He has obtained eternal redemption for all his people; and seeing it is done, what encouragement is here for a poor soul to commit himself into the hands of Christ; believing that he is able to keep him. To which may he added, the consideration of God the Father trusting Christ with the souls of his people. He has put all his beloved ones into the hands of his Son; he has trusted him with all their persons, grace, and glory; and he is faithful to him that appointed him, and will at last say, “Lo! here am I, and the children which thou hast given me.” “Well then, (may a soul say) If God the Father hath trusted him with thousands of souls, surely I may trust him with mine. If he hath been faithful to him that appointed him, in keeping the souls that were committed to him; I may believe that he will keep mine.”

IV. I pass on now to the last thing, namely, that this is the support of every true believer, in life and in death; that they know whom they have believed, This was the apostle’s support under all his trials, afflictions, and sufferings, for the sake of the gospel. Hear his own words, For the which cause I also suffer these things; nevertheless, I am not ashamed. (2 Tim. 1:12) “I am easy under them, I know whom I have believed.” So let the believer’s afflictions and sufferings be what they will, if he knows whom he has believed, he is sure that they will all work together for his good; that

ere long he shall be free from them, and be for ever with the Lord, into whose hands he has committed his immortal soul. This the apostle knew, that though men were able to kill the body, they could not reach the soul. That was in the hands of Christ, and therefore it was safe; bound up in the bundle of life; hid with Christ in God; laid and built upon that Rock of Ages, against which the gates of hell shall never prevail. The apostle was now in the view of death and eternity; and this was his support in the view of an eternal world. And the same upholds every true believer, more or less. O what a support must this be to a dying saint, that though he is leaving the world, and all things in it; though he has no more an interest in his worldly substance, relations, friends, and acquaintance, and soul and body are parting, yet still his interest in a blessed Redeemer continues! He knows whom he has believed. When flesh and heart, and every thing else fails him, God is the strength of his heart, and his portion for ever. Christ is his Redeemer and Saviour; who is the same yesterday, today, and for ever. What a supporting consideration must this be to him; that when he is brought to the streams of Jordan’s river, that blessed Redeemer, who has been his God and guide through life, will not leave him now; but will be with him through the valley of the shadow of death; therefore he fears no evil. Now he is not at a loss for a surety and Saviour; he knows whom he has believed. He knows the Lord his Righteousness; and that he has a righteousness in him that will answer for him in time to come. How delightful the thought, when he is just upon the borders of another world, that now he is departing from hence, to be for ever with the Lord to be lodged in those mansions his Saviour and Redeemer is gone before to prepare for him; that he may be with him where he is, and for ever behold his glory.

But these are but some short hints of what gracious souls more largely experience under present troubles, and in the views of death and eternity.

This knowledge of Christ was the support of our deceased friend, whose death has been the occasion of my discoursing on these words. His standing in this church has been but a short time; though an ancient professor and disciple of Jesus Christ. He belonged to other churches in the country; who gave him the

character of an upright man. For the time that he hath been with us, he has behaved as one that made a good profession of the grace of God. He walked answerable to it; and appeared to have a great deal of affection to, and a liveliness in, divine and spiritual things.

In his last illness he was very comfortable. To one that visited him, he said, he had been many years walking through a dirty narrow lane; but hoped he was now come near the end of it and he desired to depart, and be with Christ. He had no darkness nor fears upon his mind; all was bright and serene. He expressed his faith in Christ, as that foundation that will never give way: he knew whom he had believed. And so I find he continued, until he sweetly fell asleep in Jesus: and there we must leave him till the resurrection morn.

Upon the whole we may see, of what importance an interest in Christ is; to know whom we have believed, and to commit our souls to him. Of what use is this, both in life and in death! A soul may well say, "Give me an interest in Christ, or I die." There is no happiness without it and a knowledge of that interest how comfortable it is!

As to those of us who have made a profession, let us enquire what is the object of our faith and trust? Is it any thing of our own, or is it Jesus Christ? If we trust in a wrong object it will do us no good. We should also consider what our knowledge of Christ is, whether it is notional or experimental; as it is the latter only which issues in eternal life. As to those of you who are trembling, doubting believers, I would say, Give not way to unbelief. Were not you enabled years ago to give up yourselves unto Christ: to venture your souls on him. And is he not the same yesterday, today, and for ever? Why then should you give way to an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God? Leave all with him, and fear not.

To conclude, what encouragement is there for poor sensible sinners, to commit their souls into the hands of Christ, who is able to save to the uttermost; and who hath assured us, that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

20 The Doctrine Of Grace Cleared From The Charge Of Licentiousness

A Sermon,

Preached at a Wednesday's Evening Lecture in Great-Eastcheap, December 28, 1737.

1 TIMOTHY 6:3

And to the doctrine which is according to godliness.

The apostle Paul well understood the doctrine of the gospel, and its natural tendency to influence the lives of men; and was very much concerned for the honour and credit of it; that the conversations of professors might be as became it, and that they would in all things adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour. He was very desirous of instructing men of the meanest capacities, and in the lowest situation of life as servants, to behave agreeable to their masters, that the name of God, and his doctrine, be not blasphemed, ver., 1, 2. He charges Timothy, to teach these things, and exhort men to their duty; and adds, ver. 3. If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, &c; plainly intimating, that the words of Christ, or the salutary doctrines of the gospel, perfectly accord with practical godliness; and that a dissolute life and conversation is very disagreeable to them. My view in reading these words is to vindicate the doctrine of grace from the charge of licentiousness, and to prove it to be a godly doctrine, and tending to godly edification; or that it is, as expressed in the text, a doctrine according to godliness. The method I shall take in treating on this subject, will be as follows:

I. I shall explain what is necessary in the proposition, "That the doctrine of grace is according to godliness."

II. Consider the Charge of licentiousness, which is brought against it, and the nature of it.

III. Make some concessions concerning the abuse of the doctrine, by evil and wicked men. And, IV. Prove that the doctrine itself is pure and innocent, and free from the imputation of libertinism.

I. I shall explain what is necessary in the proposition, "That the doctrine of grace is according to godliness." By the doctrine of grace, I mean that system of evangelical truths which is commonly called Calvinistical; as, that God has from all eternity loved some of the human race, and has chosen them unto everlasting salvation, by Jesus Christ; that he has made a covenant of grace with his Son on the behalf of the chosen ones, which is absolute and unconditional; that Christ in the fulness of time assumed human

nature, suffered and died, to redeem a special and peculiar people to himself; that by bearing their sins, and all punishment due unto them, he has made full satisfaction to the justice of God; that a sinner's justification before God is only by the righteousness of Christ imputed to him, without any consideration of works done by him; that pardon of sin is only through the blood of Christ, and for his sake, according to the riches of his grace; that God sees no sin in his justified and pardoned ones, so as to condemn them for it; that regeneration and conversion, are by the powerful and efficacious grace of God; and that those who are effectually called by grace, shall persevere to the end, and be eternally saved, This is the doctrine of the Bible, of the scriptures given by inspiration of God, and which are profitable for doctrine, (2 Timothy 3:16) for explaining, stating, and defending this doctrine. This is the doctrine of Christ, which if a man brings not with him, who pretends to be a preacher of the gospel, he is not to be received, nor bid God speed. (2 John 9:10) This is the doctrine of the apostles (Acts 2:42) we are steadfastly to continue in and abide by; and is summarily comprised in that excellent chain of truths, Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate, to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified. (Romans 8:29, 30)

By godliness I understand not any particular grace, or the exercise of it; which seems to be the sense of the apostle, when he says, Add to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness; (2 Peter 1:6, 7) nor the whole of internal religion only; though that is the main and principal part of godliness, and is what an inspired writer means, when he observes, that bodily exercise profiteth little, but godliness is profitable unto all things; (1 Timothy 4:8) but by it I understand the whole of practical religion, both external and internal, the exercise of every grace, and the discharge of every duty: which is what the apostle designs, when he thus concludes; Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be, in all holy conversation and godliness? (2 Peter 3:11)

By the doctrine of grace being a godly doctrine, or a doctrine according to godliness, I mean, that godliness is the very life and soul of it; that it runs

through every part of it, and is breathed by it; that it is the truth which is after godliness; (Titus 1:1) that there is a perfect harmony and agreement between them; the mystery of Christ, of his person, and grace, being the great mystery of godliness; and that nothing more powerfully and effectually teaches and engages men to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present evil world, (Titus 2:11, 12) than the doctrine of the grace of God, which bringeth the news of free and unconditional salvation by Jesus Christ.

II. Though such is the nature and tendency of the doctrine of grace, a charge is brought against it, as encouraging looseness of life, and opening a door to libertinism; and it is urged, that "if God has chosen some infallibly to salvation, and made a covenant with them in Christ, to give them grace and glory, in an absolute and unconditional way; if Christ has redeemed them by his blood, and

they are justified alone by his righteousness, and being called by his grace shall never perish; then they may live as they list, and take their whole swing of sin, since their state is safe and unalterable." But this charge is no other than a suggestion of Satan; the reasoning is borrowed from him; the argument is an aping of him; it is shaped according to his plan; and perfectly agrees with what he said to our Lord; If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down; for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone; (Matthew 4:6) which is, as if he should say, "if this is the case, thou mayest do what thou wilt with thyself, no damage can arise unto thee, no hurt can be done thee." Moreover, Satan never more transforms himself into an angel of light, than when he sets up for a preacher of holiness, in opposition to the doctrine of grace; nor do his ministers ever more act the same part, than when under the guise of ministers of righteousness, or preachers of good works, they endeavour to undermine and sap the foundation of gospel-doctrine. This charge springs from malice and ignorance; and it is hard to say which is the most predominant in it; the men that bring it, are, as concerning the gospel, enemies for our sake, (Romans 11:28) and do as Diotrephes did, prate against us with malicious words; (3 John 10) their carnal minds being enmity against God, and

whatsoever is spiritually good; and being without any spiritual discerning of the things of the Spirit of God, they pronounce them foolishness, and speak evil of the things they understand not. The charge is false and groundless, and to be treated as mere slander and calumny, and must be rejected with the utmost abhorrence and indignation; and ought to have no other answer than what the apostle gives; What shall we say then, Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? (Romans 6:1, 2) However, this may serve somewhat to relieve and alleviate our minds under this horrid and heavy charge, that it is no other than what was leveled against Christ and his apostles. The spiteful and ignorant Jews charged our Lord with being an Antinomian, both in doctrine and practice; in doctrine, as appears from his vindication of himself; Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; am not come to destroy, but to fulfill: (Matthew 5:17) In practice, as is evident from those words of his; John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say he bath a devil; (Matthew 11:18, 19) he is an unsociable man, he will not converse with in any form: The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold, a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners; but, adds he, Wisdom is justified of her children. And that the apostles of Christ were treated after this manner, is plain from what the apostle Paul says; And not rather, as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say, Let us do evil that good may come, whose damnation is just. (Romans 3:8) All which should confirm us in the doctrine of grace we hold and maintain as true; since the same objections are made unto it, as were to the doctrine of Christ and his apostles.

III. It will be allowed, that the doctrine of grace may be, and has been abused by evil and wicked men, The apostle Jude speaks of some men in his days, who were turning the grace of God into lasciviousness; (Jude 4) where by the grace of God is not to be understood the love and favour of God shed abroad in the heart by the Spirit; for that can never be turned to such a purpose, it always working in a contrary way, as it did in David; thy loving kindness, says he, is before mine eyes, and I have walked in thy truth: (Psalm 26:3) nor the principle of grace wrought in the soul

by a divine power; for that being of a spiritual nature lusteth against the flesh, and can never be turned into it: But by it is meant the doctrine of the gospel, which, though lasciviousness is not in the nature of it, nor has it any natural tendency to it, yet wicked men transfer it from its original nature, design, and use, to a foreign one: Just as unlearned and unstable men, who have no spiritual understanding of the word of God, nor any scheme of truth consistent with it, wrest the scriptures to their own destruction. (2 Peter 3:16) But then, as the scriptures are not to be thought the worse of, because of these men's wresting them; so neither is the doctrine of grace a whit the less to be valued, because it is abused by ill-disposed men. Let the characters of the men that turn the grace of God into lasciviousness, be enquired into; and first, they appear to be ungodly men, men devoid of the fear and reverence of God, and devotion to him; who are not worshippers of him. Now who are they that neglect the private and public worship of God? Who are they that walk abroad in the fields on Lord's-days? or take their horses and ride, seeking their own pleasure? Who are they that frequent taverns and public houses, when they should be attending the house of God? Are these the men who are commonly called Calvinists, the asserters of the doctrine of grace? Should the examination be strictly made, the above persons will be found, if not to a man, yet by far the greatest part, Arminians, if capable of giving any account of their religious sentiments. And secondly, the other part of their character looks with a dreadful aspect upon, and plainly points out those who are on the other side of the question; denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. Who are the deniers of Christ's person, of his proper deity and equality with the Father, of his plenary satisfaction and expiatory sacrifice, of his imputed righteousness, and the efficacy of his blood? The deniers of these things are the men that turn the grace of God into lasciviousness; either by asserting it to be a licentious doctrine; or by treating the doctrine of special grace in a wanton and ludicrous manner, scoffing at it, and lampooning it; or by making the doctrine of grace universal, extending it equally alike to all mankind, and thereby harden and encourage men in sin.

Again: Be it so, that some who have notionally received and professed the pure doctrine of grace, have abused it to vile purposes; the doctrine itself is not to

be rejected on that account, but the abusers of it. The best things in the world may be ill used by wicked men; yea, even the perfections and providences of God. Mercy is a perfection of the divine nature, and what God delights in: God is merciful, and therefore, says a profane sinner, I will take my fill of sin, and doubt not, if I have but opportunity at last to say, "Lord have mercy on me," all will be well. God is patient, long-suffering, bears with sinners, and does not stir up all his wrath immediately: What effect has this upon them? Does it lead them to repentance? It should do so: But they despise the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth to repentance. (Romans 2:4) Yea, as the apostle Peter says, and we have lived to see it verified, There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. (2 Peter 3:3, 4) Which is as if they should say; we see no likelihood of the coming of the Judge, nor of the awful judgment, or dreadful doom that shall befall ungodly persons, which have been talked of; this is all dream and enthusiasm; and therefore we will take our own pleasure, and walk after our own lust. Thus because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil. (Ecclesiastes 8:11) Now must it be said that God is not merciful, patient, long-suffering and forbearing, or that he ought not to be so, because sinners make such an ill improvement of these things? How are the common mercies of life, and the most kind instances of divine providence abused, by the worst of men! Yea, even Jeshurun himself, when he waxed fat he kicked, then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation. (Deuteronomy 32:15) But must we deny the providences of God, and reject the instances of his goodness, because of the ill use that is made of them, through the wretched depravity of human nature? Nor should we discard the doctrine of grace on such an account: At this rate, the best of things, the plainest facts, and clearest truths, must be denied and rejected.

Once more: It will be owned, that there have always been some bad men in the best of societies. There was a Judas among Christ's disciples; there has always been

chaff upon his floor, and will until the winnowing time comes; and tares among the wheat, wolves in sheep's clothing, and foolish virgins among the wise, until the bridegroom appears. But then the faults and blemishes of some are not to be imputed to the whole body, nor these to principles held and professed. If this must be admitted the measure and rule of judgment, no church or congregation, no society or set of men whatever, have been, or can be free from the vilest imputations. But are the generality of those who are called Calvinists, or Antinomians, men of bad characters? Or are there more immoral persons among them, than on the other side of the question? Let them look at home, we are ready to compare notes and numbers with them; we are obliged in defence of ourselves, since our principles are charged, to use some sort of boasting, and say, in like manner as Samuel did; here we are, witness against us, before the Lord, and before his anointed: Whose ox or ass have we taken? Whom have we defrauded; or oppressed? (1 Samuel 12:3) This is worthy of notice, that the doctrine of grace never had a run among rakes and debauchees whereas it is well known the opposite to it has been, and is embraced by such, Strange! if the doctrines of free grace are of such a malignant nature and influence, have such a tendency to licentiousness, and give so much encouragement to sin, as is said, that such persons should not greedily catch at them and embrace them, at least make trial of them; when it is plain they are ready to give into all the absurd and wretched schemes of Infidelity and Atheism, in order to keep their lusts; but, instead of this, none shew a greater hatred to them: And indeed, these are as forward as any to be our accusers; though the charge comes with an ill grace from such who are abandoned to the worst of crimes, and are avowed enemies to holiness of life. One thing more I would observe, and that is, That when any who have embraced and professed the doctrine of grace fall into any open and scandalous sin, there is immediately a great clamour and uproar about it; whereas when it is the case, as it frequently is, on the opposite side, little or no notice is taken of it. What should be the reason of this? Because the case is common on one side, and comparatively rare, and but seldom heard of on the other: So that the noise that is made, and the notice that is taken, do but indeed make to our credit and reputation in general.

But supposing the instances of immorality were more than they are, and whenever they happen, are matter of lamentation: yet,

IV. I aver, that the doctrine of grace itself is pure and innocent, and not to be charged with the faults and blemishes of any of the professors of it; nor does it give any encouragement to sin, but is all the reverse: And this will be made to appear, by considering the several particular doctrines contained in it. As,

1. The doctrine of God's everlasting and unchangeable love to his elect, in every state and condition and circumstance of life into which they come. This is no ways contrary to the purity and holiness of the divine nature; for though he loves the persons of his people, and delights in them as considered in Christ, he takes no delight in their sins; sin is the abominable thing he hates; he is of purer eyes than to behold it with approbation and delight; he is not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, nor shall evil dwell with him: nor does he encourage them in sin; or connive at it, but rebukes and chastises them for it in a fatherly way; though at the same time he does not take away his loving-kindness from them; for he takes pleasure in their persons, though he bears a displeasure to their sins; nor does this doctrine in the least lead men to sin, but on the contrary, most strongly engages to the love of God, and a cheerful obedience to him: his love to them indeed does not arise from their love to him, it being prior to theirs; but then they love him because he first loved them; (John 4:19) and this love in them to him, constrains them to a willing obedience; when their hearts are enlarged with it, then do they run with alacrity the ways of his commandments; when this loving-kindness of God in choosing them in Christ, redeeming them by his blood, and calling them by his grace is before their eyes, and they have a sense of it upon their hearts, they walk in his truth; (Psalm 119:32, 26:3) in the truth of his gospel, and have their conversations as become it. This love, according as it is shed abroad in their hearts, casts out fear, and influences them to serve the Lord without fear, in righteousness and holiness all the days of their lives. (1 John 4:18) What can lay a man under a greater obligation to love the Lord, fear and obey him, than this consideration, that he loved him when he had no love in his heart to him, nay was an enemy to him; and that his thoughts were concerned about

his everlasting salvation, when he had no thoughts of God, nor any for himself? Such a consideration as this, must work much more powerfully upon him, as it must upon any ingenuous mind, than such a one as this; that the Lord began to love him and continued to do so, because he loved him and was obedient to him; and would continue to do so as long, and no longer. That is the purest obedience that is influenced by love; it is the obedience of a child, and not of a slave; and must be the most acceptable unto God; nay, there is no other service that is acceptable to him, but what springs from love influenced by his own.

2. The doctrine of the eternal, personal election of some of mankind unto everlasting salvation. Good works indeed are not the causes of God's act of election: For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger; as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated: (Romans 9:11-13) Nothing that is temporal can be the cause of that which is eternal; nor the will of man, nor any thing done by it, be the cause of the will of God; but yet good works are what God has fore-ordained, that his chosen people should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:10) Holiness is a means that is fixed in election, and an end that is secured by it; all those who from the beginning, from everlasting, are chosen unto salvation by Christ, are chosen to it through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth; (2 Thessalonians 2:13) all that are elect according to the fore knowledge of God the Father, are so through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus: (1 Peter 1:2) which sanctification is as infallibly secured, as salvation itself; for though men are not chosen because they were, yet they are, that they should be holy; and in consequence of electing grace become so through the sanctifying influences of the Spirit of God. Election is the source and spring of all true and real holiness: There would not have been such a thing as holiness in the world, since the fall of Adam, had it not been for electing grace; except the Lord had left a seed, and reserved a remnant for himself, according to the election of grace, the world had been as Sodom and as Gomorrah: And so it is, where there are no instances of this grace. Strange then, that this innocent doctrine, so friendly

to holiness and good works, should be thought to open a door to licentiousness! Besides, holiness of heart and life is an evidence of election; the internal grace of sanctification is an evidence, being a fruit of it to the person himself: Knowing, brethren, says the apostle, your election of God; for our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. (1 Thessalonians 1:4, 5) External holiness, or that which appears in the outward conversation, is the evidence of election to others. Hence that advice is given to the saints, to give diligence to make their calling and election sure; (2 Peter 1:10) that is by good works, as in some copies it is read, and as the sense requires; since both calling and election are to be made sure by some third thing. Not that they can be made surer in themselves, or to the believer, than they are; but a more sure and certain evidence may be given of them to others. Nor does any thing, nor can any thing more powerfully engage men to holiness and good works, and to honour and glorify God that way, than the consideration of this; that they are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that they should shew forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light. (1 Peter 2:9)

3. The doctrine of the absoluteness and unconditionality of the covenant of grace, is far from being a licentious one. It is true indeed, that the good works of men do not put them into this covenant, nor their evil works, their transgressions and sins, turn them out of it, who are in it; yet this does not suppose that God overlooks and connives at the sins of his people; since it is expressly said, and it is a part of this covenant, If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my Statutes, and keep not my commandments, then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes: Nevertheless, my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail; my covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. (Psalm 89:30-34) Besides, nothing more fully provides both for internal and external holiness, than the covenant of grace; and that by the most absolute and unconditional promises: it provides for internal holiness, by such promises as these, I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will

I cleanse you: A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh: (Ezekiel 36:25, 26) And in another place, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts. (Jeremiah 31:33) It provides for external holiness, and that in the most effectual manner; since God in it promises, saying, I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes; and ye shall keep my judgments and do them. (Ezekiel 36:27) Nor is there any thing under the influence of divine grace that more powerfully operates upon, and stirs up, the desires of the saints, their care, diligence, and industry to discharge their duty, than the absolute and unconditional promises of grace; such as these: As God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And I will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord God Almighty. (2 Corinthians 6:16, 18 and 7:1) Wherefore, says the apostle, having these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Add to all this, that God in the covenant of grace provides in an absolute and unconditional way for the saints final perseverance in faith and holiness; saying, I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. (Jeremiah 32:40)

4. The doctrine of particular redemption by Christ, is free from any imputation of libertinism. It is indeed a redemption from the bondage, curse, and condemnation of the law; but does not exempt from obedience to it, as it is in the hands of Christ; for saints are still under the law to Christ; (1 Corinthians 9:21) nor do any more delight in the law of God after the inward man, or more cheerfully serve it with their mind, than those who are most sensible, that they are become dead unto it, and delivered from it by the blood of Christ. Redemption is a deliverance from sin, from all sin, original and actual; and that not only from the guilt of sin, and the punishment due unto it: but in consequence of redeeming grace, the redeemed ones are delivered from the dominion and governing power of sin, and at last from the being of it. Christ saves his people from their sins; he does not indulge them in them; the deliverer that comes out of Zion, turns away ungodliness from Jacob. Strange!

that a redemption from a vain conversation should ever be an encouragement to one; or that a person's being ransomed out of the hands of Satan, and taken as a prey out of the hands of the mighty, should he an argument with him to give up himself to him and his service; or can he thought to have any tendency to engage him in a state of bondage to him, to be led as a captive by him at his will. Besides, the great end of Christ's giving himself for any of the sons of men, is, that he might redeem them from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. (Titus 2:14) Nor does anything lay such an obligation upon men to glorify God with their body and spirit, as the consideration of this, that they are not their own, but are bought with a price, (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20) even with the precious blood of Christ; nor can any thing like the love of Christ, the redeeming love of Christ, constrain men to obedience, to live not unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. (2 Corinthians 5:14, 15)

5. The doctrine of Christ's bearing our sins, and making satisfaction for them to the justice of God, is another pure and holy doctrine: For though Christ has bore all the sins of his people, all the guilt and filth of them, and all the punishment due unto them; has taken all away, for his blood cleanseth from all sin; it removes all that is in sin, and belongs to it; yet this gives no encouragement to sin; for one end of Christ's bearing our sins in his own body on the tree, was, that we being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness. (1 Peter 2:24)

Though Christ as a priest has satisfied justice, by fulfilling the law, yielding perfect obedience to its precepts and bearing the whole penalty of it; yet this does not free those for whom he has made satisfaction from obligation to regard the law, as held forth by him as King of saints; whom they own, and look upon themselves obliged to own as their judge and lawgiver; and indeed consider themselves under still greater obligation to obey his laws and commands, since he has finished transgression for them, made an end of sin, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness. Though they through the law are dead to the law, yet it is, that they might live unto God; (Galatians 2:19) the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself a pure and spotless sacrifice for sin, purges their consciences

from dead works, that they may serve the living God: (Hebrews 9:14) it is only such who walk in the light and have fellowship with Christ, whom his blood cleanses from all sin; for if we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth; (1 John 1:6, 7) Christ's suffering, the just for the unjust, the punishment due to sin, was to bring us to God; (1 Peter 3:18) not only to reconcile us to him, and to enjoy his favour, but to walk with him, to walk in his ways, and to walk humbly before him; whereas if it gave a loose to sin, and encouraged in it, it would set us at a greater distance from him Christ's satisfaction for sin does not at all weaken our obligation to duty, but increases it.

6. The doctrine of justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ, is a doctrine according to godliness, however it may be traduced as a licentious one; It neither makes void the law: nor discourages the performance of good works; nor encourages in sin; it does not annul, or make the law useless: Do we, says the apostle, make void the law through faith, that is, by the doctrine of justification through the righteousness of Christ, received by faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law; (Romans 3:31) since we assert that men are justified by a perfect righteousness, which is every way agreeable to the demands of the law, and by which that is magnified and made honourable. Nor does it at all discountenance the discharge of duty, but is the greatest motive and inducement to it. Thus, the apostle, having observed that we are not saved by works of righteousness done by us, that we are justified by the grace of Christ, and are made heirs according to the hope of eternal life, adds, This is a faithful saying; and these things, that is, these doctrines, I will that thou affirm constantly; (Titus 3:8) that thou assert them without any doubt or hesitation about them; and that thou dwell upon them in thy ministry, and frequently inculcate them; that to this end and purpose, they which have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good works. Nothing like these doctrines will induce them thereunto. Nor does this doctrine give any countenance to sinful practices; for though God justifies the ungodly, yet he does not indulge them in ungodliness. Christ's righteousness justifies from all sin, but does not justify persons in a continuance in sin. Besides, faith, which receives this blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from

the God of salvation, (Psalm 24:5) which is the reason why men are said to be justified by it, works by love; (Galatians 5:6) is an operative grace, is attended with the fruits of righteousness, is evinced by good works, made perfect by them, and is without them dead. Yet some will say, the doctrine of justification by faith is no licentious doctrine, but the doctrines of eternal justification and eternal union are. This comes from another quarter, from a set of men who should know better. What diabolical charm? what satanic influence can there possibly be in a date? If justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ alone, without the works of the creature, has no bad influence upon the life and conversation; the moving of the date of it higher than where it has been commonly put, can never be attended with any bad consequence that way; nor can any consequences arise from it, but what must also unavoidably follow upon eternal election: And as for eternal union with Christ, it is the foundation of all the good things Christ has done for his people, of all the good things the Spirit works in them, and of all the good works which are done by them; and therefore can never give birth and countenance to evil practices.

7. The doctrine of free and full remission of sins, according to the grace and mercy of God, and by the blood of Christ, and for his sake, and not on account of our repentance and good works, as procuring it, has no influence to make the conversation of a truly sensible sinner bad, but the reverse; sin never appears so odious, and in its true colours, or so exceeding sinful, as it does in the glass of pardoning love; a soul is never more ashamed of sin, and confounded on the account of it, or blushes at it, than when he is most sensible and most satisfied that God is pacified towards him for all that he has done; (Ezekiel 16:63) and that all is forgiven through the blood of Christ: nor does he ever more truly and heartily, and in an evangelical manner, mourn over sin, or is humbled before the Lord for it, than when he looks to Christ, and views all his iniquities bore by him, and washed away in his blood; (Zechariah 12:10) nor can any thing more powerfully engage men to forsake their evil ways, and course of living, and turn to the Lord, than this consideration, that he does abundantly pardon; (Isaiah 4:7) and indeed the end which the Lord has in setting forth Christ in his purposes to be the propitiation for sin, and procure the remission of

it, and in providing this blessing in the covenant of his grace, and in sending Christ to obtain it, through the shedding of his blood, and in publishing and proclaiming it in his gospel, and in applying it by his spirit, is that he might be heartily and sincerely feared and worshipped; there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared. (Psalm 130:4) He would have been feared with a slavish fear, or dreaded, as he is by devils, if there had been none; but he would never have been feared by sinful men, with a filial and godly fear, or have been worshipped in sincerity and truth, had it not been for pardoning grace and mercy through the blood of Christ; and such must be very disingenuous indeed, that can abuse such a doctrine as this, that because God has pardoned them, therefore they will sin the more against him; if there are any such that go on in sin upon such a presumption, that their sins are pardoned, they manifestly shew, that they never had any true sense of sin, or application of pardon to them.

8. The doctrine of God's seeing no sin in his people, is spoken against as an immoral one, and giving liberty to sin; but is pure, holy and innocent: For this doctrine does not suppose sin not to be sin; or that that is not sin which is done amiss by them; or that God does not in any sense take notice of their transgressions. Though they are, as considered in Christ, holy and unblameable, and unreprouvable in his sight; (Colossians 1:22) yet, as considered in themselves, they have and do many things which are faulty and blameworthy. Though God sees no sin in them, with respect to the article of justification, yet he sees all their sins, with respect to the article of his omniscience; or though he sees them not with his avenging eye of justice, yet he sees them all with his eye of omniscience. Again: Though he sees no sin in them, to condemn them, yet he takes notice of their iniquities and transgressions, so as to rebuke and chastise them in a fatherly way on the account of them. There is indeed no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus; but then these are described as such who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (Romans 8:1) God has nothing against his people, as they are justified by the righteousness of Christ, and washed in his blood; but he has many things against them, which he takes notice of in a providential way, for their good, and his glory: Nevertheless, says Christ to the church

at Ephesus; I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do thy first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. (Revelation 2:4, 5) This is the true state of this doctrine. Let any one judge, whether, in this view of it, it can be thought to be a licentious one.

9. The doctrine of efficacious grace in conversion, or of effectual vocation by the powerful and insuperable grace of God, can surely never be reckoned to have any tendency to lead persons into a vicious course of living; since they that are called by it, are called with an holy calling, and unto holiness: They have new principles of grace and holiness implanted in them: they are formed anew for God, are made new creatures, new men; and have put on the new man, which after God is created in, or unto, righteousness and true holiness: (Ephesians 4:24) They are created in Christ Jesus unto good works; and are put into the best capacity of performing them, from the best principles, with the best views and to the best ends.

10. The doctrine of the saints final perseverance can never be chargeable with encouraging immorality; unless continuance in faith and holiness is an immorality; or that it can be thought, that the way to persevere in holiness is to abound in sin. Nor does this doctrine make the use of means, or exhortations to diligence, care and watchfulness, unnecessary. The apostle Peter though he asserts that those who are elect according to the foreknowledge of God, and are begotten again according to his abundant mercy, are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation; (1 Peter 1:5) yet exhorts these same persons to gird up the loins of their mind, to be sober, and hope to the end, to be holy in all manner of conversation, and to pass the time of their sojourning here in fear; (1 Peter 1:13, 15, 17) and makes use of their sure and certain redemption by the precious blood of Christ, from a vain conversation, to move and engage them to a regard to these things. And indeed, though there is no danger of true believers falling, so as to be lost, and perish; yet inasmuch as through the weakness of the flesh, the temptations of Satan, and the snares of this world, they may so fall, as to dishonour the name of God, wound their own souls, and stumble others, there is good reason why he that thinks he stands,

should take heed lest he fall. (1 Corinthians 10:12) It is, indeed, in the way and use of means, that the Spirit of God leads on the saints in faith and holiness to the end.

Thus we have seen that the several peculiar doctrines of grace are pure and innocent, having no manner of tendency to licentiousness; but the genuine nature and design of them are, to promote holiness of life and conversation. We might easily recriminate, by shewing that the charge of licentiousness may be brought with much more truth and justice against the opposite doctrines: As for instance; if Christ has redeemed all mankind, every individual of human nature, then may a profane sinner say, "I am redeemed by the blood of Christ, and shall undoubtedly be saved, let me live as I will; for Christ could not die, or his blood he shed in vain." Should it be said, that though it is asserted that Christ died for all men, yet none can receive any benefit by his death, but such as believe, and repent of their sins: Be it so; since it is affirmed that man has a power to believe and repent when he pleases; the profane sinner may go on to say, "Seeing this is my case, I am endued with a free-will, I can believe and repent at pleasure, I will take my fill of sin, and at a convenient time I will reform, repent and believe, and doubt not but all will be well with me." So the doctrine of the saints apostasy may be improved by wicked men, to encourage them to continue in sinful courses, and to procrastinate all concerns as yet about a future state: "For," may the sinner say, "if this is the case, that a man may be truly converted, he a true believer, and penitent, and a real child of God, and yet so fall and apostatize, as to be in the same state he was before; may amend, and fall away again, and in this way go on to the end, so that it is very uncertain and precarious in what state he will die then I may, for the present at least, indulge myself in sinful pleasures; for certainly it will be acting the wiser and more rational part, for me to amend, repent, and put myself into a good state, since these are in my power, toward the close of my days, when it may be more rationally concluded I shall continue therein, and so die in a happy situation." Thus, I say, we might easily recriminate; but I choose not to load principles with consequences which are denied; nor should our opponents charge ours as they do, when we declare our abhorrence of every thing of this nature.

To conclude: Let us, notwithstanding these imputations, value and esteem the doctrine of grace, and not entertain the less opinion of it on this account. Let us stand fast in it, abide by it, and earnestly contend for it. Let us endeavour, by the assistance of the grace of God, to have our conversations as become the gospel; to adorn the doctrine of Christ in all things; to hold the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience; and so to live, as to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, and such to the blush, who falsely accuse the doctrine of grace, and our conversation in Christ.

21 The Necessity Of Good Works Unto Salvation, Considered:

Occasioned By Some Reflections and Misrepresentations of Dr. Abraham Taylor,

in a Pamphlet of his lately published, called, An Address to young Students in Divinity, by way of Caution against some Paradoxes, which lead to Doctrinal Antinomianism.

Above six years ago I sent a printed letter to the Gentleman whose name stands in the title-page to this, on account of some ill usage of myself, and contemptuous treatment of some doctrines of grace; to which he never thought fit to return an answer. The impression of that letter quickly went off, and I have frequently been solicited by my friends to reprint that, and my Discourses on Justification; but could never be prevailed upon to do any thing of that kind till now for no other reason but this; I saw that he and his friends were not inclined to enter into a controversy about these things, and I did not chose to move it afresh, or appear forward to it, which I thought reprinting would look like, or might be so interpreted; and therefore I determined to sit still, and only defend myself when any attacks were made upon me. In this resolution. I have persisted, notwithstanding the little, mean, and disingenuous methods this Gentleman has made use of, to render my character odious among men. The letter above mentioned was not written with any design to provoke to wrath and anger; nor is there a single sentence, that I can remember in it, that has any tendency that way: But it seems a grudge was conceived, which has been broiling upon his heart ever since, and now at this distance of time he, takes up a single phrase, and inveighs against it with the utmost wrath and fury; whereby he has most sadly

verified that observation of the wise man, that anger resteth in the bosom of fools.

A controversy has of late been moved, or at least revived, by some ministers of the Independent denomination, about the duty of unconverted persons to believe in Christ, or about the nature of that faith which such are obliged to; a controversy in which I have had no immediate concern: And whereas it has been given out, that a book published not long ago, called, A further Enquiry after Truth, is of my writing, though another man's name stands to it; I take this opportunity of declaring to the world, in justice to the worthy author of it whose name it bears, and that I may not take the credit of another man's labours, that there is not one single sentence of mine in it; nor did I see the author when he came to town to print, nor his performance, until it was in the press, who I doubt not will give a proper reply to the notice taken of him. The Gentleman I am now concerned with, has thought fit to nibble at this controversy; and which he might have done without meddling with me, since what he has broke his gall about, has no relation to that. He tells the society to whom he dedicates this miserable pamphlet, that he "was glad that an opportunity offered to declare against tenets, which can answer no purpose, but to weaken men's obligation to duty and holiness, and to lead to gross Antinomianism." But had he not an opportunity six or seven years ago of declaring against, not only this single tenet he has now taken notice of, but several others which he imagines has the same tendency, and of attempting a confutation of them, had he either a head or a heart for such a service? For some mouths past, we have been alarmed of this mighty work, that a learned doctor had conceived, and that in a short time the mountain would bring forth. But while we were waiting for, and expecting to see the wondrous birth, out turns a silly mouse, according to the poet's words:

Parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus.

The particular tenet, or principle struck at, is, "that good works are not necessary to salvation, not in any sense; no, not is the antecedent to the consequent." This is called "a filthy dream, a dangerous paradox, an unscriptural absurdity, (Address, &c. p. 5) an extravagant position, (p. 6) a dangerous tenet, big with absurdity; a horrible blasphemy, (p. 7) the senseless paradox, (p. 9) rude and ignorant blasphemy; (p.

10) the blasphemy invented by one of the vilest and lewdest heretics; (p. 12) the draff of those who turned the grace of God into wantonness; and, to close all, an Antinomian paradox.” (p. 13) When these ill names and hard words are taken out, there is very little left for me to reply unto. And whether the doctrine opposed deserves such ill language, will be better judged of, when the terms of this proposition, “Good works are not necessary to salvation,” and the sense of it, are explained.

By good works are meant, not the work of sanctification, principle of grace or internal holiness, which though it is sometimes styled the good work, (Phil. 1:6) yet is not the work of man, but the work of the spirit of God, and is therefore called the sanctification of the spirit. (1 Thess. 3:13; 2 Thess. 2:13) This I firmly believe is absolutely necessary to eternal happiness, both in infants and adult persons, and that without it neither the one nor the other can ever see the Lord; sanctifying grace being an essential and initial part of salvation, or that branch of grace and salvation which the elect of God and redeemed of the Lamb are first made actually partakers of in their own persons, in order to their enjoyment of the heavenly glory. This man must be conscious to himself that I have expressed myself to this purpose in my letter to him; and yet he most basely insinuates that I hold, and represents me as saying, that “A conformity to him (Christ) in holiness, is not antecedently necessary to our reigning with him in light and glory.” (Address &c. p. 13) If by conformity to holiness, is meant that internal conformity of the soul to Christ, the produce of divine grace in regeneration and sanctification; it is a thought that never entered into my head nor heart, and which I abhor. Passive holiness, or that holiness of heart which makes a soul like to Christ, and is no other than Christ formed in it, or his image instamped upon it, in the production of which it is entirely passive, is absolutely necessary to the everlasting enjoyment of him; yea, I believe that an outward conformity to Christ in conversation, or active holiness, external holiness of life, is absolutely necessary to evidence the truth of holiness of heart in all that are saved, who are either capable, or have an opportunity of performing it, and shewing it forth. This writer almost all along takes the liberty of altering the state of the question before us, and instead

of good works puts holiness; thereby to suggest to his readers that I deny the necessity of sanctification to complete happiness; which as it is an iniquitous proceeding, so it gives us a specimen of his skill in the management of a regular controversy he prates about. Nor by good works are to be understood the internal acts and exercises of grace, as faith, hope, and love; for though these are our acts, under the influence of divine grace, and so may be called our works, though not with much propriety, and as such good ones; yet these do not usually go by the name of good works, either in scripture, or in the writings of good men, or in our common way of speaking. This I mention to stop the mouths of some silly cavillers, who I perceive are fond of objecting these things. Though even these acts and exercises of grace cannot be thought to be so absolutely necessary to salvation, as that it cannot possibly be without them; since infants, as soon as born, though they may be capable of having the principles of faith, hope and love, implanted in them, yet I apprehend they cannot be capable of acting or exercising these graces: If therefore without these acts and exercises of grace persons cannot be saved, these must stand excluded from the kingdom of heaven. By good works, I understand a series of external holiness; not a single action or two, but a course of living soberly, righteously, and godly; a constant performance of religious duties and exercises, in the outward life and conversation: In this sense, and in this only, am I to be understood in the proposition before us, and in all that I have said, or shall say concerning it.

It may be proper next to inquire what is the meaning of the word necessary, and in what sense good works are so. That they are necessary to be done, or ought to be done, by all that hope to be saved by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, is readily granted; but not in point of salvation, in order to that, or with a view to obtain it. Good works are necessary to be done, on account of the divine ordination and appointment; for such as are the workmanship of God are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that they should walk in them, (Eph. 2:10) They are necessary, necessitate precepti & debiti, on account of, the will and command of God, and of that obedience we owe to God, both as creatures, and as new creatures. They are necessary upon the score of obligation we lie under to him, and in point of gratitude

for the numerous mercies we receive from him, and that by them both we and others may glorify him our Father which is in heaven. They are necessary to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour; to recommend religion to others, to testify the truth of our faith, and give evidence of the reality of internal holiness. They are necessary for the good of our neighbours, and for the stopping of the mouths of our enemies. These things I have more largely observed and asserted in my letter to this man; all which he conceals from his readers, and most vilely suggests to them, that I have vented the same notion, and am of the same opinion with Simon Magus, Carpocrates, and their followers; who held that salvation was through faith and love, but that other good works were not necessary; but were to be looked upon by men as indifferent in their own nature, being neither good nor evil; nothing being naturally evil, and so might or might not be done: Things I never thought of, and of which I have the utmost abhorrence and detestation. With what face or conscience could he insinuate any thing of this kind, when I have so fully expressed myself upon the necessity of doing good works? But what will not a man say, intoxicated with passion? True indeed, I cannot say that good works are necessary to salvation, that is to obtain it; which is the only sense in which they can be said with any propriety to be necessary to it, or in which such a proposition can be understood; and which I charge as a Popish and Socinian tenet, and hope I shall ever oppose, as long as I have tongue to speak, or a pen to write with, and am capable of using either.

Salvation may be considered, either in the contrivance of it from eternity, in the mind and counsel of God; and the designation of persons to it; or in the impetration of it in time by Christ; or in the application of it in effectual vocation by the Spirit of God; or in the entire consummate enjoyment of it in heaven. In every of these views of it, good works are not necessary to it: Not to the contrivance of it, and designation of persons to it. God when in his infinite wisdom he drew the scheme of salvation in Christ, fixed upon him to be the author of it, and appointed men unto it by him, was not moved hereunto by any works of his creatures, or by any foresight of them; they were then no moving causes with God, no conditions of salvation fixed by him, nor were as the antecedent

to the consequent; no, not in the prescience or foreknowledge of God: As they could not go before, so they were not fore-viewed by God, as any cause, condition, motive, or reason of his choosing one to salvation, and not another; For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth. (Rom. 9:11) Good works are the consequents and fruits of election to salvation, not antecedent to it. Nor are they necessary to the impetration or obtaining of it in time by Christ: These did not move Christ to engage in this work, they were no ways assisting to him in it; they did not help it forward, or in the least contribute to the performance of it, which was done entirely and completely without them.

Nor was it effected by him on condition of men's performing good works, nor were they necessary to it, as the antecedent to the consequent; they did not antecede or go before it, no, not in the divine mind or consideration, and in the view of Christ; for men were then considered, not as having done good works, but as evil amid wicked; for while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us, and obtained eternal redemption by his blood; and when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son. (Rom. 5:8, 10) Good works do not go before, but follow after redeeming grace: Christ gave himself for his people, that he might redeem them from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. (Titus 2:14)

Nor are they necessary to time application of salvation by the Spirit of God in effectual calling, neither as causes or conditions, or as the antecedent to the consequent; they can be no moving causes to it, nor do they come into consideration in the divine mind, as the reason or condition of it; they are not the rule and measure of God's procedure in this affair; he saves and calls with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace. (2 Tim. 1:9) Besides, before regeneration, before effectual vocation, before a principle of grace is wrought in the soul, before the new-creation-work is formed, which is the initial part of salvation, or that branch of it which God's elect are first actually made partakers of in their own persons, there are properly speaking no good works done by them, or can be done by them; and

therefore cannot possibly be antecedent to salvation viewed in this light, but must be consequent to it: We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. (Eph. 2:10) Nor, lastly, are they necessary to the consummate enjoyment of salvation in heaven, no, not as the antecedent to the consequent; that is, as an antecedent cause to a consequent effect, which is the easy, common and natural sense of the phrase; for who can hear of an antecedent to a consequent, unless by way of illation, but must at once conceive of that consequent as an effect depending upon the antecedent as a cause? Wherefore if good works are antecedent to glorification as a consequent, then glorification must be, and will be considered as an effect depending upon good works as its cause.

And as it will be difficult to fix any other sense upon the phrase, and persons are and will be naturally led so to conceive of it, this, and this alone, is a sufficient reason why it ought to be rejected and disused. This man himself will not say that good works are necessary as antecedent causes, or as antecedent conditions of salvation or glorification: Let him then tell us in what sense they are necessary, as the antecedent to the consequent. His performance is An address to young students in divinity, and he takes upon him to be a tutor and director of them in their studies; but leaves them in the dark, and does not offer to inform them in what sense good works are necessary, as the antecedent to the consequent. Will he say they are necessary as antecedent means of salvation? This is all one as to say they are necessary as antecedent causes, for every mean is a cause of that of which it is a mean. Will he assert that they are necessary, as an antecedent meetness or fitness for heaven? This must be denied. How can our poor, impure and imperfect works, our righteousnesses which are as filthy rags, make us meet and fit for the heavenly glory? No, it is not works of righteousness done by us, but the Spirit's work of grace within us, which will be performed until the day of Christ, which is the saints meetness for eternal happiness. Will he say That good works are such necessary antecedents to salvation, though he does not choose to say or cannot say what, as that salvation cannot possibly be enjoyed where they do not go before? I have, in my letter to him, given instances to the contrary; proving that salvation is, where good works do not go before; as in the case of

elect infants, and of persons called by grace in their last hours, when just ready to launch into eternity.

If this doctrine is true, that good works are so absolutely necessary to salvation, that there can be no possibility of any, where they do not go before; what an horrible scene must this open to parents of children, who lose by death many, or most or all of them in their infancy? since, upon this principle, they must for ever despair of their eternal happiness. One should think that such a man as this I am concerned with, would have took care to put in a saving clause in favour of infants, especially them suggested to him; who supposes that all the infants of believers are interested in the covenant of grace, and consequently must be saved, at least those who die in their infancy; and if saved, they must be saved without good works, which they neither do, nor are capable of doing.

Maresius, I observe, when treating of the necessity of doing good works, for such ends and uses as have been already mentioned, and which nobody denies, adds; "But this necessity is to be restrained to adult believers, who are able to perform outward good works; for the infants of believers are saved without them (even as they were sinners without any properly personal act of their own) though not without an inclination to them, by the grace and spirit of regeneration." Moreover, upon this principle, what hope can surviving relations entertain of their adult deceased friends; who though they have appeared to have had full convictions of their lost and miserable state by nature, clear views of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, an abhorrence of it, and repentance for it, to have seen the insufficiency of any works of the creature to justify before God, and render acceptable to him; the necessity of salvation alone by Christ; and to express some degree of faith in him and hope of the heavenly inheritance yet because they have not lived a regular life in the of health, have not gone through a course of good works, have not lived soberly righteously and godly in this present world, must he therefore everlastingly banished from the realms of light? What comfort can a man of this principle be a means of administering? or what comfortable words can he speak to a poor creature become truly sensible of sin, and his lost estate, of his need of Christ, and salvation by him, on a death-bed? Can he, though he is satisfied he has a true and thorough sense of

things, encourage him to believe in Christ, and hope in him for everlasting life and salvation? No, he cannot; he must be obliged to tell him that it is too late to think or talk of these things, there is no hope for him; for since he has lived a vicious life, hell must be his portion; for where good works, a religious life and conversation, do not go before, there can be no consequent happiness. Whereas, on the other hand, according to our principle, parents may hope for the salvation of their infants that die in infancy; there is at least a possibility of it, whereas there is none in the other scheme; surviving relatives may rejoice, in hope of their deceased friends being gone to glory, who they have reason to believe have been called by grace, though at the last hour; ministers and others are capable of speaking words of peace and consolation to distressed minds, whose hearts are pricked and become contrite on their dying beds: All which is a full confutation of what this writer asserts, that "it is absolutely impossible that it" (this tenet, that good works are not necessary to salvation) "should do good to any person whatsoever." I readily own, that good works are necessary to be performed by all that are walking in the way to heaven, and expect to be saved by Christ, and glorified with him, who are either capable or have an opportunity of performing them; but then they are not necessary as causes, conditions, or means of procuring glory and happiness for them; nor are they necessary as the antecedent to the consequent, to pave their way to heaven, to prepared and make them meet for it; or to put them into the possession of it: they do not go before in army such sense, or for any such use; they follow after Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them. (Rev. 14:13)

It is said, (Address, &c. p. 6) that it cannot possibly be for the advantage of a saint or a sinner, to be told that good works are in no sense necessary to salvation, not as the antecedent to the consequent; and that it may do a great deal of harm and mischief to the one and the other. I have already shewn it may be for the advantage, use, peace, and comfort of poor sensible sinners on their death-beds, and of surviving saints: Nor dot see what harm or mischief it can do to saints, lively or declining ones, or to profane sinners; not to lively judicious christians, who are taught and

encouraged by this doctrine to continue zealous of good works, and diligently to perform them, for many valuable, necessary uses though not order to salvation. What, will no motive induce a lively christian to do good works, but what is taken and urged from the necessity of them unto salvation? Or can he be a judicious one, that acts from such a principle? Cannot a declining christian be induced to do his first works, unless he is told they are absolutely necessary to his salvation? Cannot it be thought that arguments, taker from the command and will of God, from the glory of God, the honour of Christ, religion and truth, a man's own and his neighbour's good, demonstrating the necessity of doing good works, may be made use of as means to quicken his diligence, to cast off his spiritual sloth and carnal security, without insisting upon the necessity of them to salvation? Nor can it tend to harden sinners in sin, or put them upon running into greater transgressions, or induce them to harbour such a conceit, that in may get to heaven, let them live as they please; when they are told, that though good works cannot save them, their evil works may damn them, or be the cause of damnation to them.

As for the texts of scripture produced by this writer, they are all of them impertinently alleged, and none of them at all to the purpose. Some of them do not relate to good works, but to internal holiness, the sanctification of the Spirit, as 2 Thessalonians 2:13, 14; Hebrews 7:14 which is that grace God chooses his people to, in order to their enjoyment of glory; and without which, and that as perfect, for so it will be made by the Spirit of God, they cannot see or enjoy the Lord; and therefore it becomes them, by constant application at the throne of grace, to follow after a daily increase of it, and by their lives and conversations to evidence the truth amid reality of it. Others only express tire necessity of doing good works to testify the truth of faith, or contain motives in them to the performance of them; taken partly from the grace of God bestowed upon the saints here, and from the consideration of that happiness and glory they shall enjoy hereafter, as the fruits of grace, and not as the fruits and consequents of their works as James 1:17, &c.; 2 Peter 3:10-14; Jude 20, 21; 1 John 3:1-3. And it is easy to observe, that the whole current of scripture, and especially tire Epistles, run this way, to exclude works entirely from having any hand or concern in the justification

and salvation of men. The passage out of Clement, I suppose, is chiefly produced to grace his margin with a large citation in Greek; since it only sets forth the duty of those to perform good works, who would be found among the number of such who wait for God, and desire to partake of his promised gifts: for certain it is, that Clement did not think that good works were necessary to justification or glorification; seeing he expressly excludes them from either, when he says, "All are glorified and magnified, not by themselves or by their works or righteous actions which they have done, but by his own will: So we also, being called by his will in Christ Jesus, are justified; not by ourselves, nor by our wisdom, or understanding, or piety, or works, which we have done in holiness of heart; but by that faith, by which the Almighty God hath justified all from the beginning, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

We are next entertained with the rise and original of this tenet, that "good works are not necessary to salvation." And it seems, according to our learned author, (Address, &c. p. 11) that Simon Magus was the first broacher of it; And we are exposed as his disciples and followers; and some pains are taken to tell an idle, filthy story, of Simon's picking up a whore in a bawdy-house at Tyre, and committing fornication with her; no doubt with a view to insinuate to his readers, that our principles being alike, our practice must be so too; or, at least, that our principles have the same tendency. But if it should appear that Simon's tenets and ours are not the same, what will become of this little show of reading, and the mean artifice made use of to expose us to scorn and contempt? As for Simon's saying that salvation is by grace, and not by works, this was a doctrine he had from the apostles themselves; which he turned into wantonness, and abused to vile purposes; and is in itself never the worse, nor is it to be thought the worse of, for his ill use of it: And as for the inference made from this doctrine, that therefore good works are not necessary; this is none of ours, we disclaim it; there is no agreement between Simon's tenet and ours, about good works; he urged they were not necessary to be done, we plead for the necessity of doing them, for the ends before mentioned, and which need not be repeated. Simon, Carpocrates, and their followers, who are represented as being in the same sentiments, held that every thing, besides faith and

love, were things indifferent, neither good nor bad in their own nature, and so might be done or omitted. But can this man, with any face or conscience, say that these are our sentiments? We affirm, that good works are in themselves good, cannot be dispensed with, but ought to be performed by all men; the tenet of these men was, that good works were not necessary at all in any sense, not necessary to be done. Where is the likeness, the agreement?

Give me leave, on this occasion, to inquire into the rise and original, and to point out the authors, abettors, and maintainers of the contrary tenet, that good works are necessary to salvation. The false apostles in Judea, and other judaizing professors, were the first broachers of this notion who taught the brethren, not only that circumcision, but that obedience to the law of Moses, the moral as well as ceremonial law, was necessary to salvation: see Acts 15:1, 5 which gave the true apostles and primitive churches a great deal of trouble. To confute which, the apostle Paul especially greatly laboured in all his writings, and particularly in his Epistles to the Romans and Galatians. The Papists, the followers of the man of sin, have always been the abettors and maintainers of this principle; and so has Socinus, and his wretched adherents. The first among the reformed divines that vented it, was George Major, contemporary and familiar with Luther and Melancthon: He has been represented by some, from whom one should not have expected to have had such a character of him on this account, as *satelles Romani Pontificis*, a person employed by the Pope of Rome; a tool of the Popish party to create divisions and disturbances among the Reformed. The Papists finding they could not maintain with success their notion, that good works were meritorious of salvation, instead of the phrase, meritorious of salvation, substituted the other phrase, necessary to salvation, as being a softer one, in order to gain upon incautious minds; when one and the same thing were designed by both. And this man was thought to be the instrument they made use of for this purpose. But however this be, certain it is, that the broaching of this doctrine by him gave great offence, and occasioned much disturbance. The writer of his Life intimates, that the consequences of it gave Major himself some concern; and that he declared in so many words, that "whereas he saw that some were offended, for the future he would no more

make use of that proposition.” Among the chief of his opposers was Nicolaus Amsdorffius, who in great heat and zeal asserted, in contradiction to Major’s notion, that “good works were hurtful and dangerous to salvation ;” a position not to be defended unless when good works are put in the room of Christ, and are trusted to for salvation: But it is not doing of them, that is or can be hurtful to salvation, but depending on them when done. This controversy raised great troubles in the churches and gave Melancthon a good deal of uneasiness; who at first was ensnared into the use of the phrase, though he afterwards rejected it, as improper and dangerous. Amsdorffius did not deny that good works were to be done, but could not be prevailed upon to own that they were necessary. Melancthon at length allowed that “good works were not necessary to salvation;” nor did he dare to assert it: “For these reasons,” says he, “we teach that good works; or new obedience, are necessary; yet this must not by any means be tacked to it, that good works are necessary to obtain salvation and eternal life.” In his answer to the pastors of Saxony, he has these words: “Nevertheless, let us not use this phrase, good works are necessary to salvation.” And, in another place, “Verily I say, that I do not make use of this phrase, good works are necessary to salvation; but I affirm, that these propositions are true, and properly and without sophistry thus to be declared; new obedience is necessary, or good works are necessary; because obedience is due to God, according to that saying, Debtors we are.” Now these were the sentiments, and which are exactly ours of the great Melancthon, that peaceable man, who never was charged within running into extremes in controversy; his greatest fault, and which has been complained of by some of his friends, who have had a great regard to him and his memory, was, that he was for composing differences, almost at any rate, sometimes, as was thought, to the injury of truth, and with the hazard of losing it.

I could easily produce a large number of learned and holy men, who have asserted the same thing: I shall content myself with transcribing twelve arguments, shewing that good works are not necessary to salvation, drawn up by that learned and judicious divine Abraham Calovius; who has deserved much of all men of learning and true Christianity, for his learned animadversions on Grotius’s Annotations on

several passages in the Psalms and Prophets, relating to the Messiah; and for his laborious confutation of Socinus and his followers, and his excellent defence of the orthodox faith against them. They are as follow. The question put is, “Whether good works are necessary to salvation?” The Socinians, says he, affirm this; but this opinion is deservedly rejected.

1. Because no such thing is ever to be found in the scriptures, namely, that good works are necessary to salvation. But if this was so principal a part of evangelic truth, as the adversaries plead, it should, upon the foot of the Socinians hypothesis, be contained in express words in the scriptures; since they assert, that all things necessary to be known for salvation, are contained expressly in the scriptures.

2. The apostle treating of the causes of our salvation, removes good works, and entirely excludes them; and teaches, that he only has blessedness, to whom God imputeth righteousness without works, Romans 4:6. Compare Ephesians 2:8, Titus 3:5. If therefore good works are entirely excluded from the causes of salvation, how will the same be necessary to salvation?

3. That which is not necessary to our justification, that is not necessary to salvation; because there are no other causes of salvation than of justification: But good works are not necessary to justification. Ergo,

4. If we are saved by grace, then good works are not necessary to salvation; for the antithesis remains firm, If of grace, then not of works, otherwise grace is not grace, Romans 11:6. But the former is true, Romans 6:23. Ephesians 2:8, 9. therefore the latter also.

5. If by the obedience of one Christ we all obtain justification of life and salvation, then we are not saved by our own proper obedience: But the former is true, Romans 5:17-19, therefore also the latter.

6. What is ascribed to faith alone, as it is contradistinguished from works, that is not to be attributed to works: But eternal salvation is ascribed to faith alone, John 3:16; Mark 16:16; Romans 1:17 and 4:6; Galatians 3:11; Ephesians 2:8; Titus 3:5. Hebrew 10:38. Ergo,

7. What is necessary to salvation, that, as much as it is necessary, is prescribed and required in the evangelic doctrine, Romans 1:16. and 3:27. But good works, as necessary to salvation, are not prescribed in the gospel, which is not conversant about works, but only about faith in Christ, John 3:16 and 6:40;

Romans 1:17 and 4:6, seeing the law is the doctrine of works, the gospel the doctrine of faith, Romans 3:27; Galatians 3:12.

8. Add to this, that this assertion concerning the necessity of good works to salvation, has been already rejected as false, in the false apostles, Acts 15:5, where an opposition is formed to the sentiment of the apostles, that we are saved by the grace of Jesus Christ, and that we are saved by the keeping of the law, or works, and that the keeping of the law is necessary to salvation.

9. If good works were necessary to salvation, we should have whereof to glory; but the holy Spirit takes away all glorying from us, and for this very reason excludes good works from hence, Ephesians 2:8, 9. Romans 3:27 and 4:1, 2.

10. If our election to salvation is of grace, and not of works, as the apostle teaches, Ephesians 1:4- 6; 2 Timothy 1:9, good works cannot be asserted to be necessary to salvation; for as we are chosen from eternity, so we are saved in time.

11. By whatsoever doctrine the certainty of our salvation is weakened or destroyed, that ought to be rejected: But such is the doctrine of the Socinians, Ergo,

12. Wherever the scripture produces reasons for which good works are necessary, it mentions quite others, than that they are necessary to salvation; namely, that we ought diligently to perform good works, because of God, because of Christ, because of the holy Spirit, because of the holy angels, because of our neighbour, because of ourselves, yea, even because of the devil.

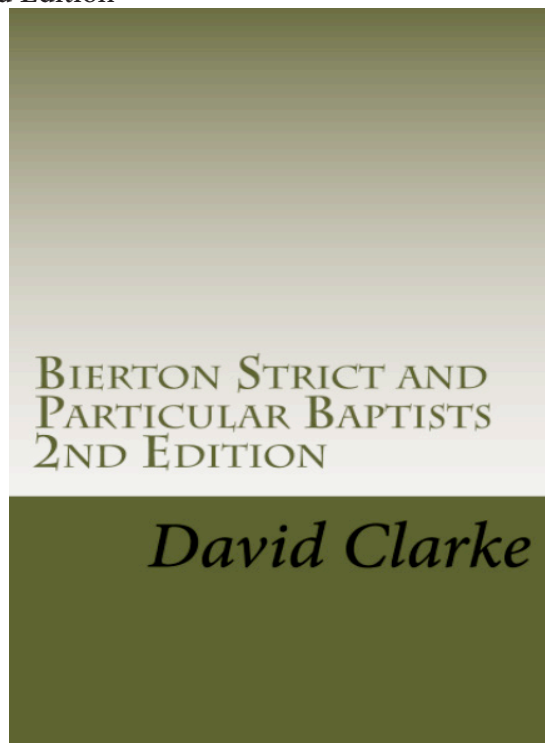
Thus this excellent writer, confuting the Socinian error, that good works are necessary to salvation, strongly defends the contrary; which our Theologaster calls a filthy dream, horrible blasphemy, &c. This it seems, is one of the paradoxes which lead to doctrinal Antinomianism. But why a paradox? A paradox, in the ancient use of the word, signified a most certain truth, at least embraced as such by men of wisdom and learning, though contrary to the opinion of the vulgar; which being unusual, struck them with surprise; whence such verities were sometimes called *παράδοξα*, and sometimes *admirabilia*. This use of the word, I suppose, will not be allowed to be applicable to this tenet. A paradox, in the modern use of the word,

or in common acceptation, designs a proposition that carries in it either a real or seeming self-contradiction. Now the proposition, good works are not necessary to salvation, is plain and easy to be understood; and is either true or false, but no paradox. We need not go far for instances of paradoxes, this writer can furnish us with enough: As when he says, "Salvation is all of free grace, and good works, the fruits of holiness, a part of salvation, are absolutely necessary to complete salvation." The word complete, in this proposition, is so placed, as that it may be thought to be either a verb of the infinitive mood; and then the sense is, salvation is all of grace, and yet good works are absolutely necessary to complete it; or as an adjective to the word salvation; and then the sense is, salvation is all of grace, and good works are absolutely necessary to salvation complete without them: Take it either way, the self-contradiction is manifest enough. As also, when giving the character of a deceased minister of the gospel, whose ashes he might have spared; he says, (Address, &c. p. 14) "he was a person of real piety, but discovered so much pride and wrath in his writings and conduct," (By the way, how could a man so wretchedly guilty of these things, write this without shame and blushing?) "that it is hard to account for it; except we allow, that he had a tincture of enthusiasm." The first of these instances is a real self-contradiction, and the other, at least, a seeming one; and both paradoxes. Again; why should this proposition, good works are not necessary to salvation, be represented as leading to doctrinal Antinomianism? This man ought to have informed his students what doctrinal Antinomianism is. Since he has not, I will. Doctrinal Antinomianism, properly speaking, is a denying, or setting aside the law of God, as a rule of life, action, or conversation. Now what tendency has the above proposition to such a notion? Or how does it appear, that the very quintessence of doctrinal Antinomianism is couched in it, as is suggested? (Address, &c. p. 5) Though we say, that good works are not necessary to salvation; do we say, that they are not necessary to any thing else? Do we say, that they are not necessary to be done? Do we say, that they are not necessary to be done in obedience to the law of God? Do we say, that the commands of the law are not to be regarded by men? That they are things indifferent, that may be done, or not done? No; we say none of these things, but all the

reverse. Do we then make void the law through this doctrine? God forbid: Yea, we establish the law, (Rom. 3:31) as it is in the hands of Christ our Lawgiver; to which we desire to yield a cheerful obedience; to shew our subjection to him as King of saints, and to testify our gratitude for the many blessings of every kind we receive from him. It is not worth my while to take notice of the flirt (Address, &c. p. 35) at the everlasting love of the divine persons being on all accounts the same, yesterday, to day, and for ever; which he knows, in his own conscience, only regards that love as in the breast of the divine persons, and not the manifestations of it; which are more or less to different persons, and so, to the same persons at different times.

Bierton Strict and Particular Baptists

2nd Edition



Authored by Mr David Clarke Cert.

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BISAC: Biography & Autobiography / Religious

This book tells the story and life of David Clarke in the form of an autobiography. It is no ordinary book in that David and his brother were both notorious criminals in the 60's, living in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, where they were MODs and were both sent to prison for and malicious wounding and carrying a fire arm without a license . They were however both converted from crime to Christ and turned their lives around.

This story tells of David's conversion to Christianity in 1970 and that of Michael's conversion, 1999 some 30 years later.

It tells of their time in HMP Canterbury Prison and David's time in HMP Wormwood Scrubs and Dover Borstal. It also tells of David's criminal activity and the crimes he committed before his miraculous conversion from crime to Christ, during a bad experience on LSD, in 1970.

It tells how he became a Christian over night and how he learned to read in order to come to a fuller knowledge of the gospel. He learned to read through reading the bible and classical Christian literature. David tells of the events that led to him making a confession to the police about 24 crimes he had committed since leaving Dover Borstal in 1968 and of the court case where he was not sentenced. It tells how David's educated himself and went on to Higher education, and graduated with a Certificate in Education and how he went on to teach Electronics, for over 20 years, in colleges of Higher and Further Education.

It tells of his life as a member of the Bierton Strict and Particular Baptist church, which was a Gospel Standard cause, and how he was called by the Lord and sent by the church to preach the gospel. David tells of the various difficulties that he faced once he discovered the many doctrinal errors amongst the various Christian groups he met and of the opposition that he experience when he sought to correct them. David recorded his experience and finding in his book "The Bierton Crisis" 1984, written to help others.

David's tells how his brother Michael was untouched by his conversion in 1970 and continued his flamboyant lifestyle ending up doing a 16 year prison sentence, in the Philippines, in 1996.

David tells how Michael too was converted to Christianity through reading C.S. Lewis's book, "Mere Christianity", and him being convinced that Jesus was the Christ the Son of the living God. David then tells of his mission to the Philippines, to bring help and assistance to Michael, in 2001 and of their joint venture in helping in the rehabilitation of many former convicted criminals, not only in New Bilibid Prison but other Jails in the Philippines.

David tells how he felt compelled to write this story in his book , "Converted On LSD Trip". once he got news of his brothers arrest, in the Philippines, via ITN Television news broadcast, in 1995. This book was published when he got news of his brothers conversion from crime to Christ in 1999, which was after serving 5 years of his 16 year sentence.

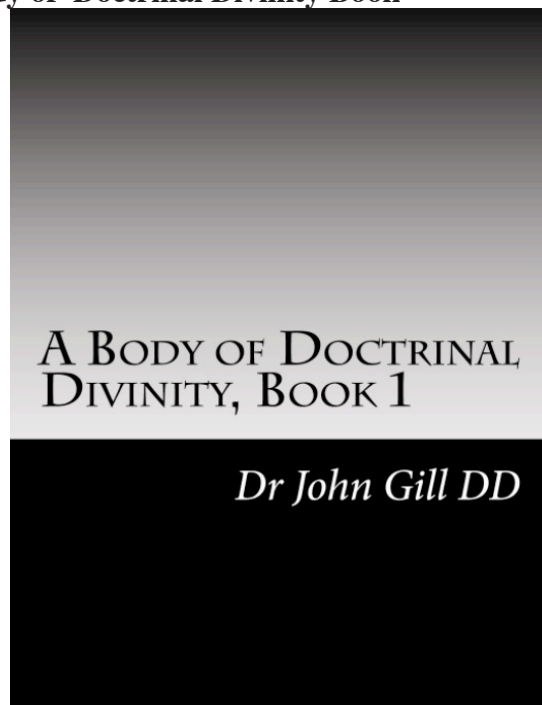
This story is told in their joint book, "Trojan Warriors", that contains the testimonies of 66 notorious criminals who too had turned there lives around, from crime to Christ, 22 of which testimonies

are men on Death Row.

David say he believes his story could be of great help to any one seeking to follow the Lord Jesus Christ but sadly Michael died in New Bilibid Prison of tuberculosis, in 2005 before their vision of bringing help to many was realized.

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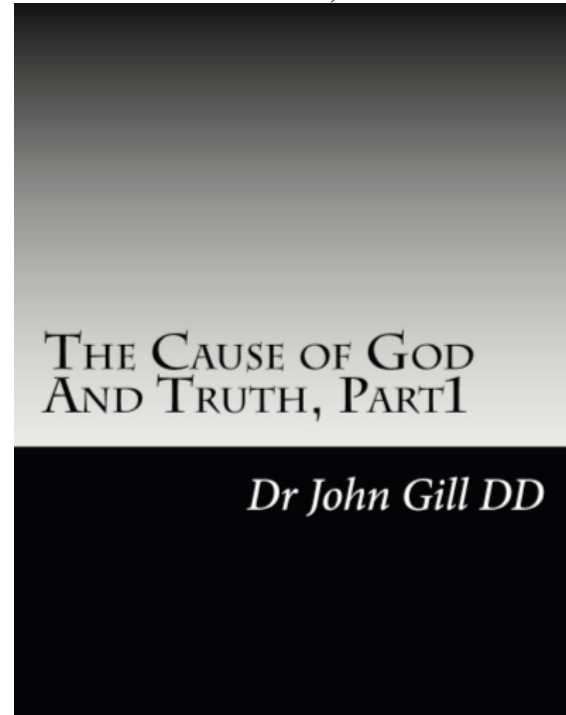
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BISAC: Religion / Christian Theology / Systematic

The following work was undertaken and begun about the year 1733 or 1734, at which time Dr. Whitby's Discourse on the Five Points was reprinting, judged to be a masterpiece on the subject, in the English tongue, and accounted an unanswerable one ; and it was almost in the mouth of every one, as an objection to the Calvinists, Why do not ye answer Dr. Whitby ? Induced hereby, I determined to give it another reading, and found myself inclined to answer it, and thought this was a very proper and seasonable time to engage in such a work.

In the year 1735, the First Part of this work was published, in which are considered the several passages of Scripture made use of by Dr. Whitby and others in favour of the Universal Scheme, and against the Calvinistical Scheme, in which their

arguments and objections are answered, and the several passages set in a just and proper light. These, and what are contained in the following Part in favour of the Particular Scheme, are extracted from Sermons delivered in a Wednesday evening's lecture.

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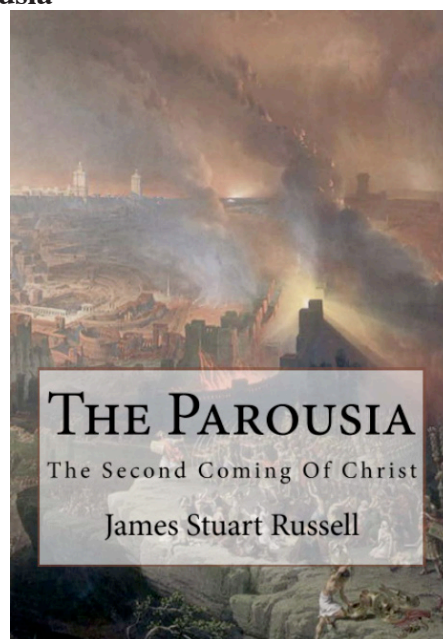
Jude 1:21.

Revelation 2 and Revelation 3.

Revelation 3:20.

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The Parousia



The Parousia 2nd Edition: The Second Coming Of Christ

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BISAC: Religion / Theology

A reformation – indeed – a revolution of sorts is taking place in modern evangelical Christianity. And while many who are joining in and helping promote this movement are not even aware of it, the book you hold in your hand has contributed greatly to initiating this new reformation. This “new” movement is sometimes called full preterism, (Also, and preferably by this writer, Covenant Eschatology). It is the belief that all Bible prophecy is fulfilled.

The famous evangelist Charles H. Spurgeon was deeply impressed with the scholarly, solid research in the book, although he did not accept the “final” conclusions reached by Russell. In modern times, this work has, and continues to impress those who read it. The reason is simple, the New Testament is emphatic and unambiguous in positing Christ’s coming and the end of the age for the first century generation. To say this has troubled both scholars and laymen alike is an understatement of massive proportions.

This book first appeared in 1878 (anonymously), and again in 1887 with author attribution. The book was well known in scholarly circles primarily and attracted a good bit of attention, both positive and negative. The public, however, seemed almost unaware of the stunning conclusions and the research supporting those conclusions, until or unless they read of Russell’s work in the footnotes of the commentaries.

Scholars have recognized and grappled with this imminence element, that is the stated nearness of the day of the Lord, seldom finding satisfactory answers. Scholars such as David Strauss accused Jesus of failure. Later, Bultmann said that every school boy knows that Jesus predicted his coming and the end of the world for his generation, and every school boy knows it did not happen. C.S. Lewis also could not resolve the apparent failed eschatology. Bertrand Russell rejected Christianity due to the failed eschatology - as he perceived it - of Jesus and the Bible writers. As a result of these “skeptical” authors, modern Bible scholarship has followed in their path and Bible commentaries today almost casually assert the failure of the Bible writers - and Jesus - in their eschatological predictions.

This is where Russell’s work is of such importance. While Russell was not totally consistent with his own arguments and conclusions, nonetheless, his work is of tremendous importance and laid the groundwork for the modern revolution known as the preterist movement.

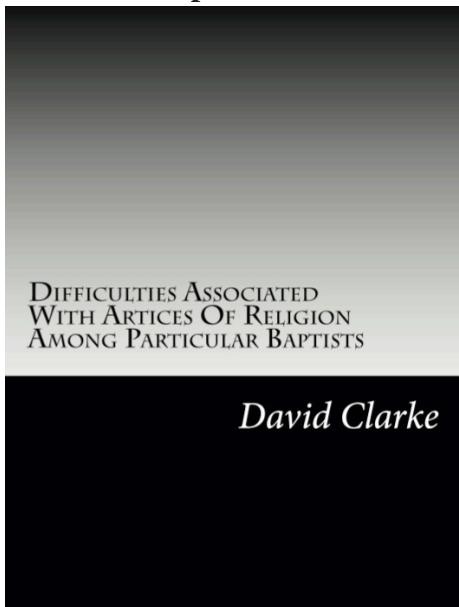
Russell systematically addressed virtually every New Testament prediction of the eschaton. With incisive clarity and logical acumen, he sweeps aside the almost trite objections to the objective nature of the Biblical language of imminence. With excellent linguistic analysis, solid hermeneutic and powerful exegetical skills, Russell shows that there is no way to deny that Jesus and his followers not only believed in a first century, end of the age parousia, but, they taught it as divine truth claiming the inspiration of the Holy Spirit as their authority.

Russell not only fully established the undeniable reality of the first century imminence of “the end,” he powerfully and carefully shares with the reader that “the end” that Jesus and the N.T. writers were anticipating was not the end of the time space continuum (end of the world). It was in fact, the end of the Old Covenant Age of Israel that arrived with the cataclysmic destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in AD 70. Russell properly shows how the traditional church has so badly missed the incredible significance of the end of that Old Covenant Age.

Russell’s work is a stunning rejection – and corrective -- of what the “Orthodox” historical “Creedal” church has and continues to affirm. The reader may well find themselves wondering how the “divines” missed it so badly! Further, the reader will discover that Russell’s main arguments are an effective, valid and true assessment of Biblical eschatology. And make no mistake, eschatology matters.

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Difficulties Associated With Articles Of Religion Among Particular Baptists: Second Edition



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Articles of religion or confessions of faith are used to inform others of what a person, a church or society believe with respect to religious beliefs. Some churches restrict membership to those who will subscribe to their articles of religion. One of the problems that this brings is that there comes a time when a new believer cannot, in conscience, subscribe to a tenet of belief that they do not understand. It may be the article is badly worded or poorly written or may, in fact, be in error. In which case a new believer could not in conscience subscribe to something they do not understand. Or it may be a member of the church begins to realize their articles of religion are in error.

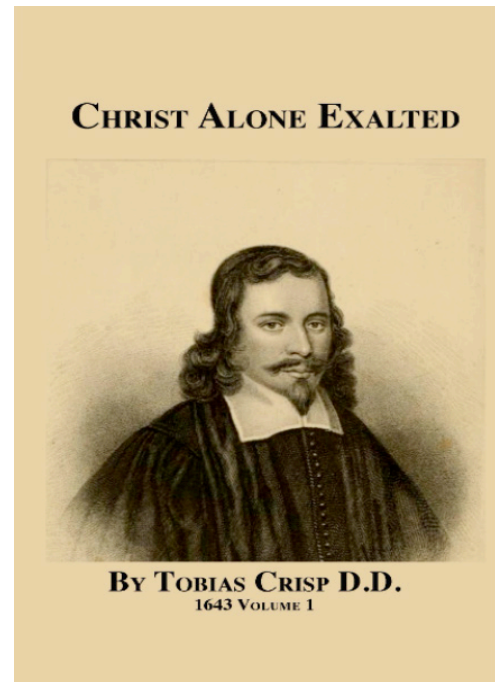
This book seeks to inform of the difficulties that articles of religion among Particular Baptists have experienced since the first London Baptists 1646 2nd Edition was published and offers an alternative solution to this problem.

This book contains the First Particular Baptists London Confession 1646 2nd Edition, The Second London Baptists Confession 1689, Bierton Particular

Baptists 1831, The Gospel Standard articles of religion 1878 and Bierton Particular Baptists, Pakistan 2016 with observations of the difficulties that have proven difficult, in the past.

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Tobias Crisp was preacher of the gospel in England. He was born in 1600 and died in 1643 at which time these 13 sermons were first published. Within 3 years further sermons were published in further volumes this is the first. He lived at the time when The First London Baptist Confession of Faith 1644 was being prepared for publishing and it is clear from these sermons he taught Calvinistic truths. He preached the doctrines of grace and was charged with being an Antinomian and provoked opposition from various quarters. Dr John Gill in defence of Crisp republished these sermons along with his own notes showing that Tobias Crisps taught clearly the truths of the lord Jesus

Christ

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Bierton Particular Baptists have republished the whole of Dr. Gills Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity, The Cause of God And Truth. Sermons and Tracts in several volumes. See our publications list at the end of this volume. We call our reader to read James Stuart Russell's book, "The Parousia" to help in the study of eschatology to treat those errors in Historicism, as mentioned in our publication, Difficulties Associated With Articles Of Religion Among Particular Baptists

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